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THE INDIAN HORIZON



Maharajadhiraja Bahadur of Burdwan.

THE INDIAN HORIZON

By

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WITH A FOREWORD BY

THE MOST HON. THE MARQUESS OF ZETLAND,
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PREFACE

IN the early winter of 1931-2 I went on a lecturing tour in the United States of America. My subject was naturally India. I outlined to my audiences Indian problems from the standpoint of the landholders and the Indian Princes. I spoke on the basis of experience as a former member of the Executive Council of Bengal and as having devoted over twenty years of my life without a break to public affairs in Indian Legislatures and on committees, commissions and conferences.

I found in the American mind an extraordinary apathy at first towards the subjects of my lectures, especially on thorny questions like that of Hindu-Moslem relations. This was caused by the fashion in the States to seek the mystic, the supernatural and the sensational. I found many keen on Indian spiritualism and astrology, and also taking what may be described as a childish interest in Mr. Gandhi and his goats. The uninformed and the intelligent alike wanted to know whether Mr. Gandhi was one of India's holy men and whether he was the coming Messiah as well as the Dictator who had the right to represent the whole of India and who voiced the wishes of the masses.

As soon as audiences began to realise that I was presenting a point of view which had never been exhibited before to an American public by a son of India their interest awakened, and everywhere I had large and,

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without exception, appreciative audiences. I was able to state facts which, whilst serving to remove many current misconceptions with regard to India as a whole, will, I am confident, make those who heard me realise the complexities of the Indian problem and also extend to the British their sympathies and possibly give some co-operation in the colossal and difficult task that Britain has undertaken in trying to raise India by successive stages to a status of political equality with the other British Dominions.

The tour did something to remove some of the unfair aspersions that were conveyed at the end of lectures by questioners here and there as to the "drain" of India by British exploiters and the standard of education under British rule being lower than under Hindu India of the past. These are myths promulgated by young and reckless Indian youths residing in or visiting the States. Most of them are disappointed men, and in some cases they are wanted by the Courts of law and the police in their own provinces in India. Their position reminds me of conditions in the province of Bengal, where, after committing some crime or other, miscreants slip over to the French portion of the town of Chandernagore, and there is much difficulty in getting them extradited for trial and sentence. In the States these youths are, I was glad to find, getting more and more discredited. In some instances their condition is pitiable and complicated by their having married American women and having become naturalised American subjects in the States.

One thing I was fully convinced of as I went on with my tour, and that is the essential need of a proper organisa-

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tion in the United States of America to present to the public true pictures of India in every walk of life, divorced of fantasies and untruths. I spoke candidly on this subject before select audiences and informal gatherings in the various important clubs in New York and Chicago, whose members opened their hospitable portals to me and gave me welcome, the warmth of which forms the pleasantest and most encouraging recollection of my visit.

When I received an invitation from Mr. James B. Pond, of the Pond Bureau in New York, to undertake such a lecturing tour in a land I had never visited before, I was not very enthusiastic, but, advised by British friends who had undertaken similar tours and with the heart that intimate friends put into me, I took my courage in my hands. I went over without a secretary or valet and found that this stood me in good stead in a democratic country like America. It taught me self-help of a kind I had never before been called upon to exercise. My grateful thanks are due to all who helped me in the States, and the hospitality and geniality of my many hosts and hostesses will never be forgotten.

Although I had carefully prepared a set of addresses for delivery, yet, with the exception of two or three lectures read as theses before a girls' school, a woman's college or a teachers' club, my addresses were almost invariably delivered extempore to public audiences. The prepared material was never, therefore, utilised exactly in the manner in which it now appears.

On the suggestion of good friends I am bringing out this little volume based on the lectures, in the hope that it may help to keep up the interest of my recent American public in the subjects of my discourses, and at the same

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time give to the British public one more study of India. It comes from the pen of one who has infinite faith in the British administration of India and the innate fairness of the British nation to all countries which they have been called upon to rule and guide, whether through conquests or mandates. For this reason I have every hope that the recent deliberations at the Round Table Conference in London, now being continued through committees in India, will bear good fruit in the furtherance of India's steady progress towards the goal that we all hope for.

My old chief and esteemed friend the Marquess of Zetland has done me great honour by undertaking to write a Foreword for which I am most grateful. I now present my conclusions to my American and British public for what they may be worth.

BIJAY CHAND MAHTAB,
Maharajadhiraja Bahadur of Burdwan.

London,
January 1932.

FOREWORD

THIS is a book of unusual interest on a subject which vitally concerns the public of Great Britain and which, for some time past, has attracted the attention of a considerable public in America. It derives a special interest from the status and personality of its author.

A very large number of books has been published during the past few years, describing and commenting on, from various points of view, what is loosely described as "the Indian problem." By this is usually meant the steps which have already been taken and the further steps which ought, or ought not, to be taken, to establish a system of self-government in India. We have had books by retired officials containing valuable information and giving to the public the conclusions reached by men with many years of personal experience of the country; we have had the hurriedly-formed impressions of tourists and the more mature reflections of sociologists; we have had the musings of mystics and, finally, much literature from the pen of the propagandist bent upon popularising the Indian Nationalist point of view. But if we except a volume written by a distinguished Moslem Prince—His Highness the Aga Khan—some fourteen years ago, with the title *India in Transition*, we have not hitherto been given the views of what may be described as the landed classes—men with great stakes in the country, with roots deep bedded in the soil and with a long and proud tradition

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behind them. Hence the peculiar interest of this book, for it contains the reflections of a thoughtful and cultured member of the Hindu landed aristocracy.

The Maharaja of Burdwan, the leading Hindu nobleman of Bengal and the owner of great estates in the heart of that Presidency, is the head of a Rajput family which migrated from the Punjab early in the seventeenth century. From his earliest years he displayed unusual courage and initiative. As a young man he broke away from the traditions of a family wedded to the customs and observances of orthodox Hinduism, and in the face of what he has himself described as "almost overwhelming opposition,"¹ sailed for Europe. That was in 1906. It proved to be the first milestone on the road which he has since travelled—one marked by almost continuous acts of service to his country, in the performance of which he has displayed a capacity for statesmanship rather than an aptitude for politics, much sobriety of judgment, a profound but discriminating love for the civilisation of the Hindu people and great physical and moral courage.

Illustrations of each of these last two virtues occur to me. In the early days of political agitation in Bengal there were emotional youths who found, as is unhappily still the case, attraction in the cult of anarchy. In the course of a public function an attempt was made on the life of Sir Andrew Fraser, then Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. Without a thought for the possible consequences to himself the young Maharaja flung himself between the intended victim and the would-be assassin and so averted a dastardly crime. The other instance which comes to mind occurred when I myself was Governor of Bengal and

¹ *Impressions : the Diary of a European Tour.*

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the author of this book a member of the Bengal Government. Circumstances during and immediately after the War made it necessary, in the interests of the community at large, to impose by legislation an arbitrary restriction on the profits which in a free market would have accrued to the owners of a certain class of property. Though the restrictions adversely affected him and many of his own class, and though he could have appealed to the findings of a Committee appointed to report on the matter in support of a policy of inaction, he brushed all personal considerations aside and himself piloted the measure through the Legislative Council. These are but sidelights upon the character of the man; I may give them without offence, for these words are written without his knowledge and, since he is at present in India, will be published before he sees them.

Here, then, is a man well qualified both by inheritance and by experience to speak with knowledge and with judgment on the Indian problem—a man who is no less a patriot than the most fervent Nationalist because he refuses to close his eyes to certain stubborn obstacles to the realisation of the dreams of the Indian National Congress, or is unwilling to condemn as *haram* (untouchable) the civilisation of every country except his own. He faces with perfect frankness the most serious of the obstacles to which I refer, namely the historic cleavage between the Moslems and the Hindus, and what he writes on this intractable question is of special value because it is written with deep knowledge and with a complete absence of prejudice.

Similarly his chapter on "The Spirit of India" contains information imparted simply and spontaneously by one

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with intimate knowledge of the Hindu outlook upon life but with a very real appreciation of the view-point of the West. Thus while he condemns utterly Mr. Gandhi's policy of civil disobedience, he points out the harm done to the British cause in India by "posters and jokes in vulgar taste" about him, by a section of the English press. "Mr. Gandhi is sincere about wearing his loin-cloth as a symbol of simplicity and poverty and Indians admire him for it; for in India the mere wearing of clothes does not make a gentleman, nor give the hall-mark of civilisation."

The Maharaja's own appreciation of the outlook of the West does not blind him to the many impalpable things arising out of racial and cultural causes which sunder the peoples of Asia from those of Europe and America. "The mentality of the *average* Indian can never be the mentality of the *average* Englishman." I have stressed the word *average* because in the sentence quoted it is the vital word and the one that is too often left out of the picture when the Englishman or the American is making a mental comparison between the peoples of India and the peoples of the West. He is apt to forget, even if he knows, that the Indian whose book he reads, or to whose lecture he listens, is not as a rule an average Indian but one who, as often as not, is to a large extent divorced from his own cultural soil. The lawyer-politician who addresses himself to the British or American public will not tell them, as the author of the present volume does, that "the absorption of the tenets of British democracy has been at best a very mixed blessing for Indians and the India of to-day." ¹

¹ It is noteworthy that a similar view is expressed in the only other book on India which may be said to be in the same category as this, namely, in *India in Transition*, by H.H. the Aga Khan, to which I have referred above.

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Nevertheless, he realises that there can now be no going back along the road on which India set foot when Macaulay penned his famous Minute in 1835; and that being so, he adduces powerful arguments ¹ in favour of conferring upon the Indian Legislatures real power and responsibility as the surest way of meeting and defeating the subversive policy of the Indian National Congress.

It would be easy to write at length on the many matters presented with admirable conciseness to the reader in these informative and stimulating pages. But I have said enough, perhaps, to show that they contain the mature reflections of a leading Indian who is qualified to speak for a class whose views are seldom heard, but one whose importance in the body politic is nevertheless a paramount one. And if I were to add yet one more recommendation, it would be that the book possesses this supreme merit that every word of it is palpably sincere and that it is wholly free from any trace of special pleading.

ZETLAND.

London,
January 1932.

¹ Pages 75 and 76.

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CHAPTER I

THE GROWTH OF THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION

AN Englishman who visited the United States of America some two years ago, giving his impressions in a magazine article, wrote : " To the great majority of Americans, India is still the land of the Hindus; Americans have scarcely heard of the Mohammedans except when some Indian lecturer assures them that Hindu-Moslem unity is an accomplished fact." I do not blame the citizens of America for this misconception, for the 1931 Census figures show that of the total population of India, now (including Burma) close upon 353,000,000, the Hindus number over 238,000,000, whilst the Moslems number only about 78,000,000. The latter are, of course, a very important minority which for many reasons cannot be disregarded. The demand for the independence of India from foreign rule comes more from the *intelligentsia* of the Hindu majority than from any minority community. This is not surprising when we realise that in the Indian Army, by which I mean that section of the army in India manned by Indians themselves, approximately two-thirds of the soldiers are Sikhs, Hindus and Gurkhas and one-third Mohammedans. Then if we look at the territories of the Ruling Princes of India, we find that 61,000,000 of the people are Hindus or belong to similar faiths, and that less than 11,000,000 are Mohammedans.

Not one in five of the "Salute" Princes is a Moslem. One can, therefore, well understand and in large measure sympathise with the desire of the Hindu in British India to-day to become free and to create an Indian India in which the Hindu influence, after cycles of bondage, would predominate, owing to the awakening and the training received under the influence of Western democracy. These cycles of bondage call for analysis before I can give a picture of the India of to-day.

We do not know the full story of the dynasties of ancient Hindu India before the Moslem invasions began in the eleventh century. This ancient history is mixed up with traditions and myths, but that history must provide a background for tracing the successive stages, through grim tragedies of the past, of the evolution of the India of to-day, and explaining how, through struggles and vicissitudes, the British Empire in India came into being.

Let us imagine India in about 260 B.C., with the great Buddhist King Asoka, the grandson of King Chandra Gupta of the Mauriya dynasty, ascending the throne of the India of that day. Historians tell us that his dominion extended from Orissa on the Bay of Bengal to the Indus in the Punjab, and included territories in that portion of Southern India known as the Deccan, and a large part of modern Afghanistan, including Kabul. In course of time the Mauriya dynasty disappeared and was followed by other Hindu dynasties.

Soon after A.D. 1000 the Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni (commonly known as the Idol Breaker), came upon the Indian horizon. The British to-day are often accused of seeking to hold their sway over India by fostering a policy

of "divide and rule." The charge may with some justification be fixed on individual British officials affected by the tropical sun, but can never with any real vestige of truth be hurled at the British Government. The fact is that the religious and cultural feuds between Hindus and Mohammedans go as far back as A.D. 1017 or 1018, when this Mahmud of Ghazni conquered the then Hindu centre of India, known as Kanauj, desecrated the holy city of Muttra and destroyed and pillaged many Hindu temples. Mahmud thus sowed the seeds of hatred and religious animosity which have survived through the ages, bringing a bitterness between Hindus and Mohammedans which breaks out at any moment, despite the talk by armchair politicians of the possibilities of good-will and amity, whether at the Round Table Conference in London or on some public platform. It is true, however, that in the Mogul period, especially during the reign of Akbar the Great, not only was Hindu feeling towards that Emperor one of at least superficial amity and trust, but since Hindus were permitted an active share in carrying on the land revenue administration and the trade and manufactures of the country, they were not discontented as a body.

India was in the grip of Mohammedan rule from the year A.D. 1017 until the establishment of British rule in India, which, for the purposes of my survey, may be said to have been accomplished by 1858—that is, the year after the Mutiny. The administration then passed from the East India Company to the Crown. As everyone knows, the connection had its beginnings in the time of Queen Elizabeth. It was in 1858 that another great English Queen, Victoria, issued her historic Proclamation, which

has always been regarded as a Magna Carta for the freedom of the peoples of India.

Looking back on the history I have outlined, one can understand the ambition of the Hindus to-day to resurrect from the debris of over nine hundred years a powerful Hindu leadership giving a deciding voice in the future of India, whether with Dominion status or such other position as may be possible, within the British Commonwealth of Nations. Should the Indian Princes finally decide to join in a federated India, the majority of the rulers of the larger Indian States, belonging as they do to the Hindu faith, will undoubtedly be able to give a very strong impetus to this ideal of a resurrected Hindu power in India. On the other hand, we have to face facts boldly, amongst them being the culture and outlook of the great Mohammedan community of nearly 80,000,000 in India.

The map of India and her internal administration would have been very different to-day, and probably the federal idea which was discussed at both the Round Table Conferences in London would have been greatly simplified, if the India of the States had not had its set-backs during the administration of Lord Dalhousie. His annexations, under a policy known as "lapse" or "escheat," were undoubtedly one of the contributing causes of the Mutiny. It would have been well if, instead of annexing the great Mahratta States of Nagpur, Satara, Tanjore and Jhansi, he could have found other methods for their efficient administration, in spite of the failure of lineal heirs, and if the province of Oudh, instead of being absorbed, could have been remodelled, like the great State of Mysore in Southern India. A Federal India, something like the

old Imperial system of federation in Imperial Germany, would have been easier to bring about than it is to-day. The annexation policy of Lord Dalhousie was not maintained, and Indian India—the India of the States—has continued to make marvellous progress since the days of the Mutiny.

The internal peace and prosperity of British India since the assumption of control by the Crown made it possible for the British Parliament of the day to consider the introduction of the Council form of Government and to delegate powers of legislation. Early in the 'sixties of the last century the first Councils Act was passed, and non-official Indians were invited to participate in the legislation of the country as "additional members" for that purpose of the Councils of the Governor-General and the Presidency Governors. My grandfather, Maharajahdiraja Mahtab Chand, was one of the first Indians to become such a legislator. A further great step forward was taken in 1882, when Lord Ripon was Viceroy. Legislation was passed to enable not only urban but rural areas to learn the rudiments of the art of self-government, by the institution of municipalities and county councils.

The next Viceroy, Lord Dufferin, desired "to give a still wider share in the administration of public affairs to such Indian gentlemen as by their influence, their acquirements and the confidence they inspire in their fellow-countrymen are marked out as fitted to assist with their counsels, the responsible rulers of the country." I quote his words because they make it clear that Lord Dufferin never contemplated the development of the Indian Constitution on democratic parliamentary lines. He was anxious "to allow Indian criticism, suggestion,

remonstrance and inquiry to exercise a very powerful and useful influence on certain classes of public business." This led to the Councils Act of 1892.

Next came the Morley-Minto Reforms in 1908. Whilst they further enlarged the Councils and provided that the majority of the non-official seats should be filled by election, they still left the power of the Executive unimpaired. It was at the time of the Morley-Minto Reforms, however, that the Mohammedans took strong exception to voting in open constituencies with Hindus. In 1906, when the question of a new Constitution for India was being ventilated by Lord Minto's Government, the All India Moslem League came into being to meet the desire of leading Mohammedans for an effective organisation to protect their own communal interests. This body sent a deputation to the Viceroy, Lord Minto, and obtained from him an assurance that in the Reforms they should have a proportion of seats reserved for them in the various legislatures and be able to vote only for Mohammedan candidates on a separate electoral roll. Lord Minto, and still more Lord Morley, made these concessions with great reluctance. They were introducing some features of the democratic principles of government prevalent in England and in the West, and they knew that communalism was not quite in keeping with those principles. But the insistent and powerfully-argued claims of the largest minority community in India could not be denied.

About a dozen years later came the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms. They were authorised in the Government of India Act of 1919. In the centre there are two legislative bodies, corresponding in a way to the Senate and House of Representatives of the American Constitution. There is,

however, a fundamental difference in the electorate, for whereas the American Congress represents practically the whole manhood and womanhood of the United States, based on the Constitution of 1787, as since amended from time to time, in India the electorates are small and divided into groups of minorities and otherwise. Owing to the franchise having necessarily to be limited, the system cannot really be regarded as analogous to that of the U.S.A. Moreover, in the Provincial Councils, which might perhaps in some senses be compared to legislative bodies in the several States, we have not only a uni-cameral house, but the bold experiment which was introduced by the Government of India Act of 1919—a dyarchical form of Government. In the words of an authority :

“ In these provinces the executive is at present a dual organism which owes its unity to the Governor. One-half of the organism consists of the Governor and his executive Council, all the members of which are appointed by the King. This body is responsible for the administration of those subjects which are ‘ reserved.’ The other half of the executive organism is the Governor acting with the advice of Ministers who are appointed by him, hold office during his pleasure, and must be elected members of the Provincial Legislative Council. To the Governor acting with Ministers is entrusted the administration of ‘ transferred ’ subjects.”

The framers of the Act of 1919 had a twofold purpose. Their primary object was to devise a plan which would render possible the introduction by successive stages of a system of responsible government in British India, in modification of the previous system under which the Governments in India, both central and provincial, received their mandates from the British Parliament, acting through the Secretary of State for India, the

Cabinet Minister responsible to Parliament for the administration of Indian affairs.

Within three years of the introduction of the Reforms in 1921, it became apparent, particularly in some of the provinces of India, that dyarchy was not working well. In consequence Lord Reading's Government appointed a Reforms Inquiry Committee in 1924, of which body I was a member. This Committee issued both a majority and a minority Report.¹ Whilst the minority wished for the appointment of a Statutory Commission much earlier than the ten years contemplated in the Government of India Act, the majority came to the conclusion that dyarchy had not had a sufficient trial and that it should be pursued further, whilst leaving the door open for the Government of India to decide as to whether or not a larger inquiry on the subject was necessary.

In view of subsequent developments I shall quote at length the section (84A) of the Government of India Act, 1919, regarding the appointment of a Statutory Commission :—

“At the expiration of ten years after the passing of the Government of India Act, 1919, the Secretary of State with the concurrence of both Houses of Parliament, shall submit for the approval of His Majesty the names of persons to act as a commission for the purposes of this section.

“The persons whose names are so submitted, if approved by His Majesty, shall be a commission for the purpose of inquiring into the working of the system of government, the growth of education, and the development of representative institutions in British India, and matters connected therewith, and the commission shall report as to whether and to what extent it is desirable to establish the principle of responsible government, or to extend, modify, or restrict the degree of

¹ Cmd. paper 2360; 1925.

responsible government, then existing therein, including the question whether the establishment of second chambers of the local legislatures is or is not desirable."

It was under this proviso that the Commission under the chairmanship of Sir John Simon was appointed, and after exhaustive investigation submitted a comprehensive and brilliant report in 1930 (Vol. I, Survey, Cmd. 3568; Vol. II, Recommendations, Cmd. 3569). One might pertinently inquire here why the Round Table Conference was necessary and what is India's need to-day. The Round Table Conference became necessary because, in spite of some very important reforms and sweeping changes suggested, the recommendations of the Simon Commission, like the Simon Commission itself, met with organised opposition from the strongest Indian political bodies, such as the National Congress, the National Liberal Federation and others. Even some of the Mohammedan Associations were far from being satisfied.

During the progress of this investigation and before the actual signing of the Report, Sir John Simon suggested to the Prime Minister the desirability of having a Conference of all parties in India and the British. No one has given Sir John full credit for this suggestion, and it was not until the Viceregal pronouncement that followed at the end of October 1929 that a good deal of suspicion in the minds of the Indian public was allayed as to Britain's sincere intention to create a friendly atmosphere for discussing a new Constitution for India. The hostility to the Simon Commission, however, continued, and although the Round Table Conference in London found important material for a future Constitution for India in that weighty Report, its recommendations were not made the basis of

discussion in the effort to frame the future Constitution of India.

It was possible, owing to the Irwin-Gandhi Pact of March 5, 1931, for the Indian National Congress (a purely political, partisan body, responsible to no one, and thus very different in constitution and functions from the American Congress) to be represented at the second Round Table Conference (September–December 1931). Consequently, every shade of political opinion in India (save that of the avowed terrorist) was represented.

The issues on which the Round Table Conference deliberated may be summed up under three questions, namely : Under a new Constitution can a real federal India be established? Can minorities be properly safeguarded and protected? Can provincial autonomy as suggested in the Simon Report be granted in full to the different provinces of India under a unitary system of government?

Very rightly, catch phrases such as “ the progressive realisation of self-government ” or “ the attainment of Dominion status ” were kept well in the background. The framers of the Constitution have to face realities and to come up against real difficulties, and not dally with idealistic desires which may be impossible of fulfilment.

Some outstanding obstacles of a military order to federation on the lines suggested may be indicated :—

1. Imperial responsibility for the Indian borderland, especially for the portion known as the North-West Frontier.
2. The necessity for maintaining a British Army in India.
3. The necessary adjustments of the future constitution of the Indian Army.

With regard to Questions 1 and 2, it is clear that in any scheme of federation these matters of defence must be

put in hands where there is no likelihood of any tampering with the strength and stability of such military forces. The third question bristles with difficulties because the army drawn from India has to be made up from races in which the martial spirit prevails. The martial races are very proud of their traditions and military prowess. In consequence they have a contempt for non-fighting communities to an extent which is hardly possible to realise in Western countries, where such distinctions do not exist.

During the Great War I was Chairman of what was really the nucleus of our efforts to raise non-combatants in Bengal to form the Bengal Ambulance Corps. Later on, when it was essential to produce actual combatants, whilst the Punjab was able to produce 350,000 recruits, Bengal, with more than double the population, could produce with very great difficulty 7,000 combatants.¹ Of the total recruits from British India, the Punjab and the United Provinces supplied three-fourths. The first session of the Round Table Conference, when going into the question of the Indian Army, was confronted by the fact that the greatest hindrance to the formation of a national army lies in the absence of military traditions and instincts in the larger part of the country.

To men like myself with a large stake in a province, the question of provincial autonomy is of even greater importance and more immediate concern than the formation of a federal structure. The Reforms Inquiry Committee of 1924 went into the question of provincial autonomy fairly thoroughly. This Committee said that provincial autonomy, in the accurate sense of the term,

¹ The relative figures of the 1931 Census were: the Punjab 23,580,000; Bengal 50,122,000.

means, (1) the existence of a central government, (2) the existence of provincial governments. The distribution of power between the central and provincial governments may vary between very considerable limits, but the central government must have some control or the autonomy of the provinces would be complete.

The conclusions arrived at by the Reforms Inquiry Committee with regard to the grant of complete provincial autonomy are to be found in their Report (Cmd. 2360; 1925). It emphasised the consideration that the central government must have certain residuary powers. So that from that point of view the Committee did not visualise the complete provincial autonomy which the Simon Commission has recommended.

The Simon Commission's recommendations briefly come to this—home rule in the provinces; each province mistress in her own house; a unitary cabinet responsible to the legislature, which means the abolition of dyarchy; and the provincial government to have the full control of administration, including law and order.

In a most useful and authoritative volume published in the autumn of 1931, called *Modern India: a Co-operative Survey* (edited by Sir John Cumming, a retired member of the Bengal cadre of the Indian Civil Service and an old colleague of mine in the Executive Council of Bengal), there is a chapter entitled "The Machinery of Government" written by Sir William Marris, some time Governor of Assam and later Governor of the United Provinces, who had a great deal to do with shaping the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms. In this chapter Sir William gives the following analysis of provincial autonomy:—

“The phrase ‘provincial autonomy,’ which has since acquired an entirely different sense, was first used in 1912 as an expression of the desire of provincial Governments, not in the least for representative institutions, but for escape from the rigid control of the Government of India. During the years 1909-19, and partly as a result of the Morley-Minto Reforms, the stiffness of the Government of India towards the provinces was thus in some measure relaxed; but it was reserved for the reformers of 1919 for the first time to impose positive limitations upon the power of the Central Government to have its way in certain spheres of business, which were definitely recognised as a purely provincial responsibility.”

The American States are not only autonomous, but are in a very different sense, perhaps, self-contained; but every province in India has its peculiar needs and difficulties. It is clear that in whatever shape provincial autonomy may be granted, the Governor of the province must have large over-riding powers, not only to preserve the safety and tranquillity of the province, but to prevent serious prejudice to any section of the community and to protect the rights and privileges of minorities such as, say, in my province, Bengal, the landholders, in their enjoyment of the Permanent Settlement; the State monopoly of forests; European education, and the protection of inland navigation (for every year the problem of the silting up of large rivers in the eastern portion of the Bengal province has become more and more difficult).

I mention these details of our domestic problems to show that provincial autonomy, which is so much to the forefront as an essential for advance in any future Constitution of India, bristles with difficulties, as each province will find in the working of a new Constitution when that autonomy is granted.

CHAPTER II

THE STATES AND THE INDIAN ARISTOCRACY

UNLIKE the United States of America, India is confronted by the problem of hereditary aristocracy, arising from the guaranteed existence of the Indian States and also from the existence in British India of a titled nobility—a class or order to which I belong. The problem has a most important bearing on the issues discussed by the Round Table Conference.

According to the latest statistics, the Indian States number in all five hundred and sixty-two, occupy two-fifths of the sub-continent and absorb much more than one-fifth of its total population. It is clear that they must be a very important factor in the solution of the problem of a united India.

One hundred and eight of these States absorb over 60,000,000 of the population of 79,000,000 in "Indian India," and these are the States which, in their own right, are members of the Chamber of Princes—an advisory body brought into existence in accordance with recommendations of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report (Cmd. 9109; 1918). A considerable category of the larger States is known in official language as Salute States, that is, those whose Rulers are entitled to a salute of guns. The States may be roughly classified as follows :—

The Rajput States, including Kashmir.

Hyderabad and the Moslem States.

The Mahratta States.

The Sikh States.

The Kathiawar States.

Mysore and the Southern Indian States, and

The Orissa Feudatory States.

Let us go back to the great, proud stock of Princes who form Rajput India. Rajput India was an India of the Golden Age, and although the storm of the Mohammedan invasions burst into India in the eleventh century, Rajput chivalry stood up against that shock for over a century and succeeded in preserving its individuality during the seven hundred years of Moslem rule that followed, for we find that throughout that period the relations of Rajput India with the Mohammedan rulers were of a feudal character. This was certainly so at the time of the Moguls, when Akbar and his family married Rajput princesses, although proud Udaipur stood aloof. Because a son of the house of Udaipur subsequently submitted to one of the Mogul emperors, even to-day, in the twentieth century, we find that the heir apparent has the last seat in the Durbar of the Maharana Adhirana and all the other Tazimi Sardars take precedence over him. This curious custom shows how proud the Rajputs are, and how firmly they cling to tradition.

The big States of India in the south or on the Bombay side are well known, but it is worth while to remember that among the Mohammedan States, outside the Nizam of Hyderabad's territories, we have rulers such as those of Bhopal, Junagadh, Rampur, Khairpur and Bahawalpur. These Mohammedan rulers also come from a proud stock. Bhopal was founded by a Mogul general, an Orakzai Pathan from the frontier, early in the eighteenth century. Junagadh and Rampur had a similar origin, whereas

Khairpur and Bahawalpur were fiefs of the Durani Empire of Kabul—relics of the conquest of the Punjab by Ahmad Shah in the middle of the eighteenth century. Of the proud Mahrattas, although their empire has gone, there are still the houses of Gwalior, Baroda and Indore, as well as that of the direct descendants of the great Shivaji, the house of Kolhapur, to proclaim to the world that they are not extinct. From the fighting houses of the Sikhs in the Punjab, the States of Patiala, Nabha, Jhind and Kapurthala have preserved their integrity by having allied themselves with Britain to avoid becoming absorbed by the kingdom of Ranjit Singh in the Punjab, and later on to save themselves from the chaos that overtook the Sikhs after the death of that monarch.

“Indian India” has made wonderful progress since the time of the Mutiny. The larger States, such as Mysore and Baroda, are as progressive as some of the provinces of British India, and the large territory in the South, known as the Dominion of H.E.H. the Nizam of Hyderabad, has recently shown a progressiveness full of great possibilities.

The question, however, remains as to how many of the rulers of these independent or semi-independent States are willing to divest themselves of some of their personal, autocratic powers and to transfer them to their representatives in a federal India. The most important among the rulers hold important treaty rights directly from the Crown or its representatives, and, in consequence, they have to examine the position closely before federating with British India. These rulers have very real power, and their principalities are so many kingdoms embedded within the wide confines of the Indian Empire.

In order to show that from the time of the great Queen-Empress Victoria, the importance of the order of Princes has been recognised by the Crown, I shall quote here assurances to the Princes and Rulers of India, given to them by Queen Victoria and her successors. First I give an extract from her Majesty's Proclamation of 1858:—

“ We hereby announce to the Native Princes of India that all Treaties and Engagements made with them by or under the authority of the Honourable East India Company are by Us accepted and will be scrupulously observed; and We look for the like observance on their part. We desire no extension of our present Territorial Possessions; and while We will admit no aggression upon Our Dominions or Our rights to be attempted with impunity, We shall sanction no encroachment on those of others. We shall respect the rights, dignity and honour of Native Princes as Our own; and We desire that they, as well as Our own subjects, should enjoy that prosperity and the social advancement which can only be secured by internal peace and good Government.”

The next is King Edward's Coronation message to the Princes :—

“ To all My feudatories and subjects throughout India, I renew the assurance of My regard for their liberties, of respect for their dignities and rights, of interest in their advancement, and of devotion to their welfare, which are the supreme aim and object of My rule, and which, under the blessing of Almighty God, will lead to the increasing prosperity of My Indian Empire, and the greater happiness of its people.”

The last three are extracts from the utterances of King George V at different times. The first was at the Delhi Coronation Durbar in 1911 :—

“ Finally, I rejoice to have this opportunity of renewing in My own person those assurances which have been given you by My revered predecessors of the maintenance of your rights and

privileges and of My earnest concern for your welfare, peace and contentment.

"May the Divine favour of Providence watch over My people and assist Me in My utmost endeavour to promote their happiness and prosperity.

"To all present, feudatories and subjects, I tender Our loving greeting."

Extract from King George V's Proclamation, 1919 :—

"I take the occasion again to assure the Princes of India of my determination ever to maintain unimpaired their privileges, rights and dignities."

Extract from King George V's Message to the Princes, 1921 :—

"In My former Proclamation I repeated the assurance given on many occasions by My Royal predecessors and Myself, of My determination ever to maintain unimpaired the privileges, rights and dignities of the Princes of India. The Princes may rest assured that this pledge remains inviolate and inviolable."

From these pronouncements it is clear that whatever constitutional changes may be given by the British to British India, they have not only to respect and maintain unimpaired the privileges, rights and dignities of the Princes of India, but will also have to protect their people from being absorbed into a Greater India, if the Rulers of such States do not wish for such absorption.

The question therefore arises, how far can the Rulers of Indian States divest themselves of their sovereignty by joining in any scheme of federation for India as a whole? No doubt the position would be simplified if those big Chiefs or Rulers who have not already adopted constitutional forms of government in their dominions were to exercise a certain amount of self-denial and pass an ordinance which would fix a reasonable civil list, intro-

duce the reign of law, establish a graded Civil Service on British lines and help generally to develop a reasonably up-to-date administration.

Sir John Simon and his colleagues, discussing the ultimate Constitution of India and proposing that it should be federal, suggested a Council for Greater India, with one-third of the members to represent Indian States. Let us examine what are the subjects in which Indian States can participate in any federal scheme. They must certainly have a voice in questions of the internal and external defence of India; in the policy of railway administration; in relation to customs; mint and coinage; postal and telegraph services, and the manufacture of salt and other commercial commodities.

Of those members of the Indian States Delegation who were delegates to the Round Table Conference, the Rulers of Bikanir (Rajputana) and Bhopal (Central India) have been foremost in expressing an earnest and sincere desire to promote a federal scheme. But there are difficulties—very real difficulties—in the way, and I cannot do better than give extracts here from an article from the pen of Sir Robert Holland in the *Nineteenth Century and After* (September 1931). Sir Robert had a distinguished career until 1925 as a Political Officer in many Indian States, and he has retired recently from the Council of the Secretary of State for India. He points out in the following passage why the Princes joined the Round Table Conference and to what they lent their support :—

“ The Princes who at the Round Table Conference lent their support to the idea of Federation appear to have been swayed by four motives. First, their well-known and proven loyalty to the British Throne, to which their dynasties are anchored,

impelled them to back the scheme which seemed to afford the most certain means of scotching the revolutionary movement and maintaining the British connection. Secondly, they wished neither to stand in the way of reforms for British India nor to appear to do so. As patriotic Indians they desired that India should through federation attain to equality of status with the sister Dominions within the British Empire. Thirdly, they believed that a federal Constitution, into which the States would enter by treaty of their own free will as equal partners, would secure their internal autonomy and safeguard their fiscal and other rights in matters of common concern. Fourthly, they hoped that in the process of federation the treaty rights of the Princes would have to be defined in such a manner as to eliminate the discretionary element from paramountcy. This may be gathered from the speeches at the Conference.

"The Indian States Delegation, in assenting to the principle of Federation made stipulations to the following effect :

"(1) That entry into the Federation should be by treaty, and that it should be at the discretion of each individual State whether to conclude such a treaty or not.

"(2) That the inherent sovereignty, autonomy and treaty or other rights of the States should be safeguarded and maintained intact except to the extent to which the Rulers delegate them voluntarily to the Federation.

"(3) That all matters affecting the Rulers personally or their dynasties should be reserved for decision by the Viceroy as agent of the British Crown."

Sir Robert Holland then points out the further development in the Chamber of Princes where the Maharajadhiraja of Patiala, the late Chancellor of that Chamber, has since had reason to find fault with the provisional scheme adopted for a federal India. He summarises the Maharajadhiraja of Patiala's objections as follows :—

"(1) That it would be well-nigh impossible to devise a federal scheme which would embrace the vast number of

States and provinces existing in India, and that if such a scheme were devised it would be unworkable and doomed to failure.

" (2) That there is at present no trace of the existence of a federal spirit throughout India. Without it no federal scheme could succeed. There is no political or cultural affinity between the States and the provinces.

" (3) That the scheme would be prejudicial to the interests of the States, because it would entail disproportionate sacrifices on their part. There would be no equality, because the States and provinces possessing the greatest population and resources would outweigh the others.

" (4) That the States would gain no advantage as regards the question of paramountcy. The paramount powers lying outside the scope of the federal Constitution would continue to be exercised by the agents of the Crown in the same manner as before, but the federal Legislature and Executive would *inevitably interfere; not only in respect of federalised subjects, but also in matters outside the scope of the federal Constitution.* It would be impossible to secure a judiciary sufficiently strong and independent to maintain the equilibrium between conflicting powers and interests.

" (5) That there must be a clash of political traditions and ideals between the States and British India, and that federation would in this manner subvert the basis of their well-tried and time-honoured political institutions. It is therefore futile to contend that the sovereignty and treaty rights of the States would remain unchanged.

" (6) That a vast number of smaller States and principalities would certainly be swallowed up and disappear from the map."

This extract will show the great difficulty that Indian States have to face in connection with their entry into any scheme of federation. Sir Robert Holland points out that many things are inevitable :—

" (a) To democratise their internal systems of government within a given period.

“(b) To permit the States’ representatives, in the Federal Assembly at least if not in the Upper Chamber, to be elected by the people; and

“(c) To grant to their subjects the right of appeal from State courts to a federal Supreme Court. If these demands were conceded it would mean that the internal independence of the States and the Princes’ treaty rights, as they understand them, would not be maintained intact.”

The question is, Are the Princes going to be so patriotic in their desire to see India become a nation and achieve Dominion status one day as to assist in such a federation by some surrender of their rights and prerogatives? I confess I have my doubts, not only because I know that a number of these Rulers jealously guard their privileges, rights and dignities, but I am not sure whether some of the chief officials in certain States or even the subjects of such Rulers would desire to lose their present independence and individuality throughout their kingdoms or territories.

The Round Table Conference was therefore faced with a very difficult problem in trying to mould into a new Constitution this great and important element of Indian India, and further light will be thrown upon the problem by the States Inquiry Committee sent out to India under the chairmanship of Mr. J. C. C. Davidson, M.P., early in 1932.

Now let me turn to the great zamindars or landlords whose position might in many ways be likened to that of the feudal barons and nobles in England of old, as well as to that of the dukes and other titled landed aristocracy of Great Britain to-day. This is specially so with regard to the baronial houses of Bihar, the great taluqdars of Oudh, and the titled landed aristocracy of Bengal and of the permanently settled tracts of Madras.

Historians have handed down to us facts about the oldest Hindu polity to be found in the Laws of Manu and others which show that India, although not a land of peasant proprietors as understood in the West, contained peasants whose duty it was to cultivate the land and pay a share of the gross produce to the king. This king's share of the gross produce was the origin of the land revenue system as it exists in British India to-day.

Mohammedan Rulers made no material alteration in this arrangement, although during the time of Akbar the Great Mogul, his gifted Revenue Minister, Raja Todar Mull, codified the system of land revenue in such a way that even to-day the British to a great extent model their land revenue policy on that code. In the time of the Moguls, however, the peasants' small holdings became smaller than ever, because under Moslem rule large areas were left in the hands of Hindu chiefs who paid, and held themselves responsible for paying, a fixed sum by way of tribute and had a free hand with the peasants. These Hindu chiefs are in many cases to-day the Rulers of Indian States.

Later on, when the disintegration of the Mogul dynasty began, new and large occupiers of land came into existence, and the founder of my own house was one of them. He had gone with his family from the city of Lahore in the Punjab to visit the holy temple of Jaganath, at Puri in Orissa, early in the seventeenth century. On returning from his pilgrimage in bullock carts he halted at a village about twelve miles away from the present town of Burdwan. It was then the rainy season, the month of July, for he had come back from the sacred city of Puri after the great Car Festival there, and finding beautiful rice-fields

all round him, he exclaimed, " This is paradise," his actual words in Hindustani being " Yeh Baikuntha hai." He acquired certain villages with arable land lying round them and gave to the principal village the name of Baikunthapur, which still belongs to my family. From this sprang the Burdwan zamindari (estate) extending to-day over four thousand square miles and containing about two million souls.

In Bengal, although the vicissitudes of the times have impoverished most of these estates, we still have the proud representatives of the great houses of Nadia, Nattore and Dinajpore, held in great reverence by the people for the great services which they have rendered to the community by encouraging education, arts and sciences in their province and among their people.

One delegate at the Round Table Conference was the young and promising premier nobleman of Bihar, the Maharajadhiraja of Darbhanga, who comes from a truly princely house which also dates back to Mogul times and is one of the wealthiest in the whole length and breadth of British India.

These big landlords or members of the landed aristocracy in British India found themselves in a peculiar position, particularly in the provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, which absorbed in those days a portion of the province now known as the United Provinces and which contained a good number of the baronial houses of Oudh. These rich landlords found that whilst possessing some of the semi-independent rights of the bigger feudatory Rulers of Rajputana and elsewhere, these rights had been given away over their heads by the then powerless and decrepit Mogul Emperor to the representative of the British

merchants by the grant to Lord Clive of the Dewani of the provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. We may therefore say that the British concern with the land revenue system dates from the year 1765, when by this grant the East India Company became Revenue Minister for Bengal and the adjoining region. Land revenue transactions of the British were with the people in possession, who in many cases were feudal lords owning very large areas, and who were often no less important than hereditary chiefs of recognised feudatory States. The British authorities considered how best to arrive at a settlement with these feudal nobles, especially as Britain's Empire of India had not begun and the East India Company was in constant clash with those portions of India that were still independent, and with the great French power in India. Hence there was great need for money for military purposes. That was one of the chief reasons why Lord Cornwallis brought about the Permanent Settlement by which since 1793 the Governments of Bengal, Madras and the United Provinces receive from landholders fixed land revenue in perpetuity. The arrangement in many instances, as in my own, has been a mixed blessing. The incidence of land revenue in my case is believed to be the highest in the world for any single landowner. Yet the Permanent Settlement is considered by the landholders as a treaty right which has become more and more sacrosanct with the passage of time.

These landowners have not only very large estates to maintain and very large amounts of land revenue and cesses to pay, but they have to look after the welfare of their tenants, to found schools and colleges, hospitals and dispensaries, and in any public movement have to pay

subscriptions and donations sometimes well beyond their means. They have a very real stake in the country, and at present their only privilege, outside certain hereditary distinctions, is to be able to enter the various legislative bodies in India by a separate electorate of their own. They have recently been up in arms against the ill-conceived suggestion made by the Simon Commission that, as they can now get themselves represented through more than one channel, these special electorates might disappear. This has caused great consternation among them. In discussions of safeguarding minorities this matter came before the Round Table Conference, and the Federal Structure Committee recommended the retention of the special representation of the landlord interest.

CHAPTER III

HINDU AND MOSLEM

IN the first chapter I avoided discussing the safeguards the minorities in India ask for in the framing of the new Constitution. I traced the history of the reluctant admittance of the principle of separate electorates for the Mohammedans in the Morley-Minto and Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, but did not explain what the Hindu-Moslem question really means.

I mentioned that according to the 1931 Census figures the Hindu population of India exceeds 238,000,000. We have to take into consideration that among this vast aggregate there are over 75,000,000 who do not observe the caste system of Brahminical India, that is, the India which is under the sacerdotal influence of the Brahmins. It is largely among these that what are known, for want of a better definition, as the Depressed Classes are to be found. These Depressed Classes—"Oppressed" Classes would be a better description—have a great grievance against the Brahmins and the religious preceptors of the Hindus in that they have been denied certain privileges belonging to the Hindus of the four great castes.

Whilst Depressed Classes are to be found in Bengal and the Punjab, their greatest aggregations are in the Central Provinces, and certain parts of Bombay and Madras. In Madras there is a conglomeration of Dravidian races, perhaps the original inhabitants of India, driven from

their northern homes when the Aryans came into India. Among these Dravidian races is to be found a most curious mixture of great enlightenment and crass ignorance, as well as acute questions of untouchability and other problems. These Depressed Classes have had their say at the Round Table Conference.

The original basis of difference was undoubtedly a religious conflict, because these outside castes are the masses of people in India to whom Brahminism has refused admission to the ordinary social Hindu life. Originally some of them embraced other faiths, in order to escape their unenviable position, and that is why you find that Christianity has such a strong hold in Southern India. Some, again, turned to the religion of Islam in their desire to enhance their social status. Under these two religions the converts from these classes have been able to obtain the recognition of a status which was impossible under Brahminical Hinduism.

How much these Depressed Classes distrust the Hindus, although the majority of them are classified as Hindus, and their dislike of being governed by other minorities is revealed by their Round Table Conference champion, Dr. Ambedkar, when he spoke in London on the Minorities problem on October 8, 1931. He said the Depressed Classes were not anxious for the transfer of political power from the British Government, but if there was such transfer it should be accompanied by conditions and provisions preventing that power from falling into the hands of a clique or of an oligarchy, or into the hands of a group of people, whether Moslems or Hindus, and ensuring the sharing of that power by all communities in their respective proportions.

The future of these classes is one of the great problems of Hinduism to-day. Brahminism cleverly drove Buddhism out of India Proper, centuries ago, by making Buddha the ninth Avatar, that is the ninth incarnation of Vishnu, and whilst including him in the Hindu pantheon, declared his religion to be Atheism. Similarly Brahminism to-day may yet find some elastic means by which to give the Depressed Classes a place in the Hindu social system; but it is no good denying the fact that at present, in many parts of India, orthodox Hindus object to members of the Depressed Classes having access to their schools and temples. I believe that in Southern India particularly, contamination by coming into contact with them is considered a sin abhorrent to the higher classes of the Hindus, particularly to those known as the twice-born castes. In these circumstances there is no alternative for them but to classify themselves as a minority community and to seek special representation and fixed seats in the various legislative bodies of India. This, therefore, is one of the minorities, and an important one, which seeks safeguards.

Next in importance come the Sikhs. They were looked upon as Hindus, more or less, until the Akali movement in the Punjab a few years ago, when Hindu images were as irreverently treated as in the time of the Mogul Emperor Aurungzebe, the desecrator of Hindu temples. Consequently a great bitterness was engendered between the Hindus of the Punjab and the Sikhs; and although, fortunately for the Hindus, this bitterness has died down, the Sikhs prefer not to be considered as belonging to a branch of Hinduism. These Sikhs number about 4,000,000 and, next to the Gurkhas from the kingdom of

Nepal, who form a considerable section of the Indian Army, they are the strongest non-Moslem martial body in India. In recent years they have also shown great business capacity and Sikhs are found as wealthy merchants all over the world. Although their tenets differ from those of Hindus, specially in their objections to the influence of the priestly class and the rigidity of caste, they are united with the Hindus in one respect, namely, dislike for the Mohammedans. The Hindus under Aurungzebe suffered insults and their places of worship were desecrated, as when this Mogul Emperor broke down a Shiva temple at Benares and erected a mosque, which is to-day one of the landmarks of the holy city. He persecuted the Sikhs still more and killed in cold blood the ninth Guru or preceptor of the Sikhs, because he refused to accept the faith of Islam. It is only natural that the Sikhs should remember this crime. In consequence, there is in the Punjab a fierce animosity between the Sikhs and the Mohammedans. The Sikhs are united with the Hindus in standing against the Mohammedans, but ask for special representation in the provincial (Punjab) and central legislatures of India.

The necessity for giving more seats to Labour in India has been urged. The Whitley Commission Report,¹ opens up a vista full of possibilities for the working classes of India, particularly in industrial areas, but for a long time to come they will be considered as a minority and their interests as such will have to be safeguarded.

The position of the community known as Anglo-

¹ Report of Royal Commission on Labour in India. Cmd. 3883, 1931.

Indians, who not very many years ago were called Eurasians and who are so ethnographically, is of pathetic interest. Born of mixed European and Indian parentage they fall between two stools. Their great difficulty will be to find suitable employment. The reservation of a few seats for them in the federal or provincial Councils will, to my mind, only aggravate their own handicap. As Indianisation grows apace in every branch of public service in India, this minority community whose cause neither the white man nor the brown seems anxious to advance or make easy, will be in a more and more difficult position, and migration to other British possessions might become a greater and more urgent necessity than at present. The tragedy of it all is that in spite of our claiming to be more civilised than our forefathers, we know that we have not moved forward very much where the question of shouldering the fruits of youthful follies and racial indiscretions is concerned. To my mind many of these Anglo-Indians deserve better treatment than they now receive, and I hope that they will get the fullest consideration in the future progress of the India for which we are all so anxious.

India owes to the European merchants a great deal of its present wealth and prosperity in the realm of trade and commerce, and perhaps her gratitude to them has not been adequate. Under the guidance of white men, many Indian merchants in Bombay, Calcutta and other industrial centres such as those in the United Provinces, have been able to found business firms of their own, and where they once were servants they are now becoming masters. With the passing of time, the spread of education and the growth of enterprise and competition, this was bound to happen,

and I must say, to the credit of most British merchants, they have not been slow to recognise the spirit of the age. Although there are some who are far behind their more sensible countrymen, the majority have recognised the necessity for co-operation with the Indian merchants and having prominent Indians with business ability in their firms.

These British firms, represented by their chambers of commerce and trade associations, not only ask for separate electorates and reservation of seats in the various legislative bodies, but their greatest concern is to obtain an assurance from the British Parliament that under the new Constitution there will be such safeguards as will give financial stability to India and will enable them to carry on their businesses without fear of their rights and privileges being encroached upon by race discrimination, so that they can carry on their peaceful avocations and have all the rights of citizenship. They are a very important minority, and I for one cannot visualise an India for many years to come which can prosper and grow in importance in the world of trade and commerce without the backing of British capitalists and the help of Western industrialists.

Now I turn to the crucial communal problem in India. In most quarters it is held that the dislike—or, to put it more candidly the distrust—between the Hindus and Mohammedans is more religious than racial. The first chapter in *Modern India: a Co-operative Survey* (Oxford University Press, 1931), has been written by one of India's most able past administrators, Sir Harcourt Butler. On the question of Islam *vis-à-vis* Hinduism he expresses himself as follows :—

"Islam with its great doctrines of the unity of God and the equality of man in the presence of the Creator stands out as the chief opponent of Hinduism or Brahminism, in India. Although in some areas it is tolerant of Hindu ideals, and has to some extent adopted them, it is in essence uncompromisingly hostile. It is iconoclastic to the worship of idols, which forms so large a part of popular Hinduism, it ignores caste to a large extent, though it has been influenced by it, rejects child-marriage, and recognises the remarriage of widows. Again, the Moslem eats meat, and especially the flesh of the cow, the cheapest meat in India, an abomination to the Hindus, who reverence the cow. And, finally, Moslems can never forget that they have been a ruling race for many centuries in India before the British came and established their rule over the sub-continent. In their hearts they believe that with help from Afghanistan, the frontier tribes and the virile Moslems of the north-west and in Central India they could, if the controlling hand of British rule were removed, conquer India."

One may ask how Mohammedanism found its way into India, for ancient India, whether Brahminical or, at a later date, Buddhistic, was of course non-Semitic. In the first chapter I have mentioned the advent of the Mohammedan invaders into Hindu India at the beginning of the eleventh century. If we examined the question carefully, we should find that the Mohammedans had begun to come into India, for purposes of conquest or exploitation, some time during the eighth century, when some Arab hordes were driven back by the Rajputs. "An Indian Mohammedan," in his book *The Indian Moslems* (London, 1928) writes :—

"Why did the Moslems first come into India? Because it was visibly a disunited country, a congeries of quarrelling principalities with no bond of union, no sense of common

interest, between them ; in no sense a single and united State, but one in which the call of patriotism fell on deaf ears. A territory existing under such conditions invited invasion ; a people without any warlike aptitude, and among whom such heroism as existed took the form of suicide, could not repel it. The India of the Hindus was a land susceptible of conquest. Providence seems to have decreed that lot for them as a natural inheritance. It was the Mogul emperors who first broke this rule by gathering up all the regions of the peninsula under their sway—an example in which they were followed by their British successors. The talk of a united India, apart from those two supremacies, is but a figment of the imagination."

This gives another point of view and claims for the Mohammedans the rôle of conquerors—a rôle which was *kept up in spite of the dismemberment of the Mogul Empire* until the time of the Mutiny. There was a tendency among historians of an earlier day to discuss whether the Indian Mutiny was a struggle to regain supremacy by the various Mohammedan elements to be found at the time of that rebellion, or whether it was a widespread upheaval particularly of Indian sepoys. The latter deeply resented the use of cartridges smeared with the grease of oxen and pigs—a practice abhorrent to Hindus and Mohammedans alike. For a long time after the Mutiny, when the embers of it had died down, the Mohammedans seemed to be looked upon with less favour by some British officials than the Hindus. This may have contributed to the extent to which the Hindus left the Mohammedans far behind in Western education and gained a virtual monopoly of appointments requiring a knowledge of English.

The Moslems remained in a state of suspended animation

for years, and awakening was due to the efforts of that great Mohammedan statesman Sir Sayad Ahmad Khan, who, in the teeth of violent opposition from the orthodox, preferred in the interests of their faith and culture the classical languages of Arabic and Persian to that of English. He founded in 1877 the Moslem College at Aligarh in the United Provinces, which developed in 1920 into a university and is in one sense the centre of modern Mohammedan education in India. Sir Sayad Ahmad Khan awakened a burning desire to obtain a share in the higher spheres of life, in what was their forefathers' conquered domain. It is not too much to say that in the time between the Mutiny and the founding of the Aligarh College, the Mohammedans were not only treated as backward but as a community, if not quite in disgrace, under a cloud of suspicion.

It was not until Lord Dufferin's time that the interests of Mohammedans were taken up in greater earnest by the British Government in India. It will not be out of place for me to quote from Lord Dufferin's Minute annexed to the Government of India Despatch in 1888, reproduced in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms :—

“ Perhaps the most patent characteristic of our Indian cosmos is its division into two mighty political communities, as distant from each other as the poles asunder in their religious faith, their historical antecedents, their social organisation and their national aptitudes; on the one hand the Hindus, numbering 190 millions, with their polytheistic beliefs, their temples adorned with images and idols, their veneration for the sacred cow, their elaborate caste distinctions, and their habits of submission to successive conquerors; on the other hand, the Mohammedans, a nation of 50 millions, with their

monotheism, their iconoclastic fanaticism, their animal sacrifices, their social equality, and their remembrance of the days when, enthroned at Delhi, they reigned supreme from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin. To these must be added a host of minor nationalities—most of them numbering millions—almost as widely differentiated from one another by ethnological or political distinctions as are the Hindus from the Mohammedans."

In spite of the efforts of the British Government in the time of Lord Dufferin, however, the Mohammedans seemed to make little progress. It was left to the founders of the All-India Moslem League nearly a quarter of a century ago to emphasise the dividing line between Hindus and Mohammedans and to express their disinclination to be on a common electoral roll with their Hindu fellow-countrymen. They had considered it detrimental to their interests to have been included for so long with the Hindus, and knowing full well that in the way of securing appointments under Government, the Hindus had had a start ever since the Mutiny days, they wanted to emphasise their distinct place in the body politic. They therefore demanded among other things separate electorates for the legislative bodies and other self-governing institutions. I may quote the speech of Lord Minto, the Viceroy, in reply to the deputation of Mohammedans headed by the Aga Khan which went to him at Simla on October 1, 1906, when the Morley-Minto Reforms were first under consideration :—

"The pith of your address, as I understand it, is a claim that, in any system of representation, whether it affects a municipality, a district board, or a legislative council, in which it is proposed to introduce or to increase the electoral organisation, the Mohammedan community should be repre-

sented as a body. You point out that in many cases electoral bodies, as they are now constituted, cannot be expected to return a Mohammedan candidate, and that if by chance they did so, it would only be at the sacrifice of such a candidate's views to those of a majority opposed to his own community, whom he would in no way represent, and you justly claim that your position should be estimated, not merely on your numerical strength, but in respect to the political importance of your community and the service that it has rendered to the Empire. I am entirely in accord with you. Please do not misunderstand me: I make no attempt to indicate by what means the communities can be obtained, but I am as firmly convinced as I believe you to be, that any electoral representation in India would be doomed to mischievous failure which aimed at granting a personal enfranchisement regardless of the beliefs and traditions of the communities composing the population of this continent. In the meantime, I can only say to you that the Mohammedan community may rest assured that their political rights and interests will be safeguarded in any administrative organisation with which I am concerned."

CHAPTER IV

THE MINORITY PROBLEM TO-DAY

IN accordance with the pledge given by Lord Minto, and afterwards grudgingly recognised by Lord Morley, under the Reforms which bore their names, Mohammedan representation in the various councils, both provincial and Imperial, was based on separate electorates, and "weightage"—representation in excess of numerical proportion in provinces where they formed a minority—was given. In regard to this system the authors of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms felt the same disinclination on principle as Lord Morley. But the demand for retention of the system was definite, and the Government of India of the day, as well as the Secretary of State, came to the decision, inevitable in the circumstances, that the Mohammedans must be treated as something more than a minority—that is, as a community and race within a race, a sub-nation within a sub-continent. This was the conclusion Sir John Simon and his colleagues could not avoid. They wrote in their Report :—

"In the absence of a new agreement between Hindus and Mohammedans, we are unanimous in holding that communal representation for the Mohammedans of a province must be continued, and that Mohammedan voters could not be deprived of this special protection until a substantial majority of Mohammedan representatives in the provincial legislature declared themselves in favour of the change. The first and

immediate point is that it cannot be made now, without doing such violence to Mohammedan sentiment as could not be justified either on grounds of policy or on grounds of equity."

Most unfortunately, when the Reform Act of 1919 was brought into force in 1921, the Moslems of India were much perturbed by the position of Turkey, whose Sultan had long enjoyed in their eyes the position of Khalif. Great resentment was shown when the terms of the draft Treaty of Sèvres (1920) became known, for this not only meant the break-up of the Ottoman Empire, but reduced the Sultan to a state no better than that of a vassal prince. The Khilafat movement in India that followed is well known. Meanwhile modern Turkey has been built up under that great, adventurous statesman, Mustapha Kemal Pasha, and the question of the Khilafat seems no longer to exercise the minds of the people of Turkey, although regrets may lurk in the hearts of some of the old Sufies and Maulvies; but the Indian Moslems even now have not been reconciled to the loss that they have sustained by the disappearance of the Ottoman Empire and the abolition by the Turks of the Khilafat.

During the Civil Disobedience movement in India in 1930, it became more or less apparent that the breach between Hindus and Mohammedans could not in any way be said to be limited to their less educated and more unruly sections, to whom hooliganism comes as naturally as to hooligans all over the world. When the advanced Nationalists brought forward a draft Constitution for India in what is now known as the Nehru Report (published in India in 1928), the Mohammedan leaders all over India offered strong opposition to the scheme. In a book by the Imam of the Ahmadyya community called *The*

Nehru Report and Moslem Rights we find the following somewhat quaint but illuminating account of the causes of friction between majorities and minorities :—

“ Of the different causes that make for a clash between minorities and majorities, the following are the most potent :—

“ (1) In case the minority had held its sway over the majority in the near past and oppressed it, or created an impression in the mind of the majority that it had been so oppressed; in both these cases the majority is obsessed with the idea of avenging itself.

“ (2) If the minority has a culture and social order which is superior to and predominant over that of the majority, then the majority feels impelled to destroy the minority because of its constant fear that, given the opportunity to progress, the minority will obliterate its own culture and social order.

“ (3) When there is something peculiar in the minority which prevents it from being absorbed in the majority, the latter feels ill at ease over the prospect of the country being always divided into two parties with no hope of the minority merging in the majority, nor even of its being so reconciled to the majority that its distinctive features might disappear and there might be at least an outward appearance of unity.

“ (4) When a minority has such potentialities as to make the majority apprehensive that, if not curbed, the minority will one day become the majority.

“ (5) When the minority does not consider itself to belong to the country and has its eyes fixed upon its brethren beyond the country, then the majority feels apprehensive lest the minority should some day deal with it treacherously, and therefore it tries to suppress it.

“ (6) When the majority is benefited materially by the economic backwardness of the minority, it is afraid lest it should lose by an awakening among the minority.

“ These are the six important causes, the existence of some or all of which makes the majorities resort to a policy of aggression against the minorities, and the minorities distrustful of the majorities. A consideration of these factors will lead

every sensible man to the conclusion that there is no reason why bigger minorities should be less in danger than smaller ones. On the contrary, it is apparent that whether the minority be big or small, it will be equally in danger whenever there are present the above-mentioned conditions. In fact, a very small minority which forms only one or two per cent. of the entire population, or less, has practically nothing to fear, because the majority is fully confident that its position is in no danger. It is therefore that the Christians, the Buddhists, and the Parsees, who together form only one-tenth of the whole population, are in no danger at all. If there is any class that is in a real danger, it is the Mussalmans, regarding whom the Hindus might feel apprehensive that they might one day increase and overwhelm them."

The All-Parties Moslem Conference held at Delhi in January 1929, after the publication of the Nehru Report, had two bodies of opinion on it, for there were men who were friends of the National Congress, such as the late Mr. Mahommed Ali, who stood for complete independence, and also men like my friend the late Sir Muhammad Shafi, who had a large following. The latter favoured co-operation with the authorities in framing a Constitution and India remaining within the Empire. Thus the two sections, whilst agreeing on the unsuitability of the Nehru Report, differed greatly in what they thought should be the goal of India. It was only through the tact of the President, H.H. the Aga Khan, that this Conference reached some sort of compromise,¹ and, in doing so, gave something of a death-blow to the All-India Moslem League which had gradually been losing its hold on the people. The new organisation comprising the Moslem members of the Legislatures became the rallying-point of the saner and

¹ The detailed resolution adopted is given in the Simon Report, Vol. II., p. 84.

more serious-minded sections of Moslems, as it was bent upon safeguarding the rights of Moslems.

In July 1930 the Executive Board of the All-Parties Moslem Conference, meeting at Simla (the summer capital of the Government of India), formulated the demands of the community. It examined and rejected the Simon Report but welcomed the Round Table Conference. Some of the members of this Conference had at one time been parties to the slogan, "*Swaraj* (self-government), if possible with the British connection, and without it if necessary," but since then Mohammedan opinion had veered round more and more, as was quite apparent at the first session of the Round Table Conference in the winter of 1930-31. They were unwilling to accept joint electorates, wishing to retain their separate constituencies, to safeguard the community against possible Hindu aggression, and to have guarantees of a proper share in the Cabinets and Councils and the various public services. They asked that Sind should be taken from the Bombay Presidency and made a separate province; also that the North-West Frontier Province should be raised to the status (at present dyarchical) of a Governor's province.

During 1930 these demands were affirmed and reaffirmed at various places. The Indian National Congress began its campaign of civil disobedience and the Hindu delegates at the first Round Table Conference were quite unable to allay the Moslem fears. Moslem sentiments found expression in an extraordinary speech at a Moslem League Conference at Allahabad delivered by the President, Sir Mahomed Iqbal, the great Urdu and Persian poet. What Sir Mahomed demanded was not only the protection of Mohammedans everywhere, but, if

everything failed, the formation of a Moslem *bloc* State in the north-west, with Sind, the Punjab, the North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan within the territory of India. In Northern India, from whence the poet comes, the Mohammedans being in the majority can draw inspiration from across the border, from Afghanistan, Persia and elsewhere. They feel strongly that they should not lose their individuality as a distinct community and culture.

This brings us to the conclusion that the Hindu-Moslem question cannot be solved by a few strokes of the pen. The two communities must go on side by side like two rivers which never are likely to meet or fall into the sea at the same place. There cannot be the slightest doubt that were the strong hand of Britain to be removed from India immediately, the Mohammedans would gather strength and get succour from across the border. They would have assistance in overrunning India from the descendants of those very hordes which came centuries back from Afghanistan and Persia and carried Islam into India as a great force.

As I believe, as every Indian must, that there can be no real Indian nation until joint electorates can be introduced into India, I suggested, in a lecture which I gave under the auspices of the East India Association in London, shortly after the Simon Commission was appointed,¹ that mixed electorates might be tried as an experiment. But it soon became apparent to me that when the Simon Commission had reported and the Mohammedans had considered their position, they would not be a party to coming into any scheme that would necessitate their

¹ See *Asiatic Review*, July 1928.

giving away the rights and privileges which they had exercised since the Morley-Minto Reforms, with regard to special representation. Separate electorates, therefore, will most likely have to be maintained.

Whatever racial hatred or distrust may be found among European nations, say one a Latin and the other a Teuton, and whatever differences may exist in different Churches of Christianity, there is nothing in such racial distrust or religious differences to compare with the fundamental differences which exist between the extreme Mohammedan and the bigoted Híndu. In this connection I cannot do better than give a further quotation from the book *The Indian Moslems* :—

“ While the Hindus present on analysis a discordant and disunited collection of congregations with no predominant central conviction or ideal, the Moslems form a solid body animated by a single overmastering conviction in the supremacy of their Deity, and guided by the exhortations and admonitions of the Koran, to which Hindu devotees can produce no rival. Islam represents not only a virile but a visible religion. Hinduism is more or less of a mystery, of which the Brahmins are alone allowed to hold the key. Should the spell ever be broken, the cleavage that must follow would be nothing short of complete dissolution. The Hindu majority rests, then, on insecure foundations ; the subsoil may repose on a quicksand.

“ It may be retorted that the Moslems are not themselves united in their own body, because there are Sunnis and Shias. But between these two divisions there is no fundamental difference in religion, laws or political opinion. They accept different points of view with regard to the Prophet’s immediate successors and interpreters, but, except on rare occasions and in special localities—such as Kerbela—this variance in practice produces no discordant note of animosity, much less any of those violent clashes of enmity which have separated

the Maratha from the Jat, and the Jat from the Sikh. . . . In Islam, so far as its rights and needs are involved or expressed there is not, nor has there ever been, any division of opinion or separation in action. The solidarity of the Indian Moslems is intact and impervious to the shafts of the envious."

We have to realise that though Hindustan is principally the land of the Hindus, for over ten centuries another Eastern race and culture, coming for conquest at first, is now domiciled in India and numbers as much as 80,000,000. Unless this race and culture is allowed to maintain its separate entity and to exercise the rights and privileges that it desires, the solution will not come from within but from without.

A third party like the British must be near to keep the Hindus and Mohammedans from flying at each other's throats until the majority community can see, admit and of its own free-will and common sense realise that the minority community must go on existing as a homogeneous unit with its peculiarities as a part and parcel of the Indian nation; and also until the minority can so trust the majority as to go on building that Indian nation, and considering themselves Indians first and Mohammedans afterwards. Until that stage is reached the dream of a united India—India a nation—cannot be fulfilled in any complete sense. She must continue to be a congeries of races, creeds and sects. One thing, however, is clear: it is inevitably an occasion, if ever there was one, of *festina lente*, unless a miracle were to happen, which, alas! does not happen so easily to flesh and blood as to inert objects in this machine age.

The Aga Khan, one of the most competent of living judges of the Mohammedan spirit, in a broadcast to the

U.S.A. in the autumn of 1931, presented the Hindu-Moslem question very clearly. He declared that "the Mohammedans will resist to the last any attempt which, under colour of democracy, places them at the mercy of any other section." This statement goes to show that the breach cannot be bridged, and will delay indefinitely India's emerging out of the Round Table Conference as a nation in the real sense of the term.

This is made clear by what took place at the second session of the Round Table Conference on October 8, 1931, with regard to the minorities problem, when Mr. Gandhi, after ten days of protracted private discussions under his chairmanship, said :—¹

"It is with deep sorrow and deeper humiliation that I have to announce utter failure on my part to secure an agreed solution of the communal question through informal conversations among the representatives of different groups."

He then went on in his characteristic way not only to blame the Government for the composition of the Indian delegation, but in the same breath, admitting the difficulties of the communal question, to say that he had not a shadow of doubt that the iceberg of communal differences would melt under the warmth of the sun of freedom.

Such contradictions brought forth sharp retorts not only from one of the Mohammedan leaders, the late Sir Muhammad Shafi, who entirely dissented from Mr. Gandhi's views, but also from Dr. Ambedkar, representing the Depressed Classes, who challenged Mr. Gandhi's renewed exposition of the mandate which the Indian

¹ See Indian Round Table Conference, Second Session, 70-260, 1931, p 530.

National Congress had given him, and Mr. Gandhi's claim that this extreme organisation represents the whole Indian nation and most decidedly the dumb millions, among whom were included all the Untouchables. Dr. Ambedkar said that although there might be people in the Congress who were ready to show sympathy towards the Depressed Classes, the latter were not in the Congress.

At the first session of the Conference Mr. MacDonald, along with some of his colleagues in the late Labour Government, was inclined to treat the communal question too light-heartedly, and for the sake of advance seemed willing even to override the claims of some of the minorities. I know that that was the inclination of the late Secretary of State for India, Mr. Wedgwood Benn. But during the second session at the Minorities Committee meeting on October 8, 1931, the rift in the lute was so complete that the Prime Minister, after giving a piece of his mind to Mr. Gandhi for his accusation against the Government, exclaimed :—

“ Be honest and face the facts. The communal problem is a problem of fact. Does the problem exist in India or does it not? I do not answer it; I leave you honestly to answer it for yourselves and to yourselves.”

In another portion of his speech the Prime Minister said that the Government would take action if the Conference could not go on to an end, because it was determined to make such improvements in the government of India as would make the government of India consistent with British ideas and make something that was capable of greater and greater expansion towards liberty. The Prime Minister had to say this because he realised that H.M. Government of the day has to draft a Constitution

for India, for it is the British Parliament that must pass a new measure for the purpose. The ultimate responsibility lies with the Imperial Government; and in view of the problem of minorities, the progress towards political freedom will be fettered, if fettered at all, by the Indians' themselves.

The machinery of administration in India has grown top-heavy since the reforms of 1919, in the desire of the British to bring Indians in larger numbers into the Executive. But to my mind the whole structure is faulty in the sense that it is unsuited to the Indian atmosphere. Although it is now impossible to suggest going back, one cannot help feeling that the Morley-Minto Reforms were discarded in too great a hurry in order to copy Parliamentary forms of government existing in the West, with the result that we are very much in a blind alley. One hopes, therefore that the Constitution that is expected to emerge from the Round Table Conference and the Committees in India, when it comes for enactment before the British Parliament, whilst meeting Indian hopes and aspirations, will give a stable rule to India for many years to come. It should sweep away provisions for periodical surveys by commissions or otherwise. Such inquiries have an unsettling effect on the Indian mind and open the door for further trouble and turmoil. If progress in the India of to-day is to be real and lasting, every community must help. The British officer on the one hand must realise, as he does, not only that a change of heart is necessary, but that there must be a real delegation of powers to the sons of the land; that Britain's fair name must not be smirched by individual brutal acts committed by British Army officers serving in India, nor by

want of courtesy and consideration among men in any of the Civil Services. Having given to Indians a taste of Western democracy and the ideals of liberty and equality as understood in the West, the British must stand by the Indians and teach them to attain the goal which we all desire, namely, the progressive realisation of responsible self-government. On the other hand, if Indian statesmen, Indian rulers and Indian politicians are sincere they must sink differences and must not allow the cult of hatred to spoil the great programme that is in front of them; they must give to the world at large a horizon of India bright and cheerful, and must bring to their work good-will and co-operation. Further, they must look upon the continuance of the British connection for the good of India herself as inevitable, upon British officers as their friends and British merchants as co-partners in a national programme of prosperity.

CHAPTER V

POLITICAL GROUPING IN INDIA

THERE is only one political party in India which is properly organised, and that is the Indian National Congress. But before I come to the history of the Congress it may be helpful to consider when and how the political parties in India started growing. It is no good asking whether India had any political parties in pre-Mutiny days, but it is worth while to trace the genesis of such parties voicing their sentiments in the English language. In the early days of the nineteenth century the great champion of Oriental literature and culture was Dr. Horace Wilson, under whom the Education Department in Calcutta was placed. In those days Calcutta was the hub of the British India universe. Dr. Wilson prepared a scheme for the advancement of Oriental culture and requested the Directors of the East India Company to provide him with necessary funds in order to improve the Hindu College at Benares and the Mohammedan College in Calcutta, and also to establish a Hindu College at the Presidency. In answer he was snubbed by James Mill, the historian of India, in the following words :—

“ In proposing to establish seminaries for the purpose of teaching mere Hindu and mere Mohammedan literature, the Government bound itself to teach a great deal of what was frivolous, not a little of what was purely mischievous, and a small remainder indeed in which utility was in any way

concerned. The great end of Government should be, not to teach Hindu and Mohammedan learning, but useful learning."

A few years later came Thomas Babington Macaulay, afterwards Lord Macaulay, who, as a member of the Supreme Council a century ago, denounced in no uncertain language the continuance of the promotion of Oriental culture in the following words:—

"We are at present a board for printing books which give artificial encouragement to absurd history, absurd metaphysics, and absurd theology. . . . The great object of the British Government ought to be the promotion of European literature and science among the natives of India, and the funds appropriated to education would be best employed on English education alone."

The result was the vigorous policy followed by two successive Governors-General, Lord William Cavendish Bentinck and Lord Auckland, in the introduction of English education in India. Whilst the schools for Oriental learning were maintained, the important work of translating Sanskrit and Arabic books was discontinued.

I often wonder what the shades of Lord Macaulay and Lord Bentinck must think of the results of the Anglicist policy established in 1835, in the belief that the study of English would transform the Indian into an Englishman, and, as Macaulay said, "create a class, Indian in blood and colour but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect." The answer close upon a century later was Mr. Gandhi coming to London in a loin-cloth and claiming to represent the dumb millions. The mentality of the average Indian can never be the mentality of the average Englishman and, in consequence, the absorption of the tenets of British democracy has been at best a very mixed blessing for Indians and the India of to-day.

Certain political associations came into being before the Indian National Congress, notably the Indian Association, Calcutta, of which the late and great Sir Surendranath Banerji was a towering support for many years. Another earlier body was the British Indian Association, also of Calcutta, which is the mouthpiece of the landholding classes in Bengal, and before the repartition of Bengal in 1912 was also the mouthpiece of Bihar and Orissa. This Association has had many illustrious noblemen, both of Bengal and Bihar, at its helm, and men such as the great Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra and Rai Bahadur Kristo Das Pal as its secretaries. While these bodies, as well as one or two Mohammedan Associations in Calcutta, were nominally rather provincial in character they attained more importance in those times than they could have reached at the present day. As Calcutta was the seat of the Government of India, these bodies not only had a provincial character but an all-India importance.

The Morley-Minto and the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms brought into existence direct representation for important minorities, whether Moslems, the landholding classes, the Universities, etc., but they have not (outside Madras at least) created real parties in the sense that people understand parties in America, where Democrats and Republicans abound and there are few minorities. What is more important is that although there are so-called Liberals in the legislative bodies, and although in most of them, particularly in Bengal and the Legislative Assembly, the Swarajists have been holding a strong position, nothing corresponding to a Conservative party able to make itself felt as a national organisation has developed.

The reason for this is not far to seek. The Indian Governments in the past protected some minorities by nomination, and if the Governments were to continue this method, men of the conservative type would not be able to evolve a party organisation. Whilst I dissociate myself completely from the opinions of Sir John Simon and his colleagues in recommending the non-continuance of the special electorates for the landholding classes, which would be a serious blunder at present, I feel strongly that the sooner the important provinces in India decide to have Upper Chambers, like the self-contained bi-cameral Legislatures in each American State, the better for the formation of a Conservative party from the more stable elements in the country, and the better for the future Governments of India.

I hold this view so strongly that should Upper Chambers in India develop in the way that I should like to see them develop, then, but then only, would I be prepared to consider, so far as may be feasible, the question of abandoning minority representation (even if necessary, for the landholding classes) excepting perhaps for the Europeans and the Mohammedans. Somehow the word "minority" conveys a sense of inferiority—an inability to hold its own against a majority.

Now let us turn to the history of the Indian National Congress, which, I have said, is the only well-organised party machine in India. It was founded in 1885 by a Mr. Allan Octavian Hume (1829-1912), a retired member of the I.C.S., and held its first session at Bombay in the Christmas time of that year. The fundamental principles of the Congress were laid down as follows :—

"Firstly, the fusion into one national whole of all the

different and discordant elements that constitute the population of India ;

“ Secondly, the gradual regeneration, along all lines, mental, moral, social and political, of the nation thus evolved ; and

“ Thirdly, the consolidation of union between England and India by securing the modification of such of the conditions as may be unjust or injurious to the latter country.”

These principles may be said to have been followed up to the year 1907 ; but meanwhile the estrangement between the ruling class and the ruled had been growing. Among those who fomented trouble were the Mahrattas, for although they had ceased to be considered in India as a power, among the stone-grey-eyed, highly intelligent Chitpavan Brahmins of the Mahratta country, there are men in whose breasts surge the ambition for a Hindu India and in particular “ India for the Maharashtras.” After the terror of the Mutiny in 1858, Nana Sahib, a Chitpavan Brahmin, disappeared with the infamy upon him of the Cawnpore massacres. Two great moderate politicians of India of a former day, Ranade and Gokale, belonged to that sect of Brahmins, but the man who more than any other caused the Congress to harden into unfriendliness against the British, Mr. Bal Gangadhar Tilak, was also a Chitpavan Brahmin.

The cult of independence that is preached to-day in some quarters of India by those who look to Russia as an example and wish to be styled Socialist Republicans, has no use for kings. Tilak’s ideals were different, for he was an advocate of the old Hindu system and restoration of Brahmin rule. Tilak got his chance in 1897 when the Bombay Government, trying to fight the terrible outbreak of bubonic plague in that presidency, enforced schemes of segregation which were most unpopular among

the masses. Tilak's fiery articles in the Press were held to be at least indirectly responsible for the murder of Mr. Rand, the Plague Commissioner, who had been held up as a tyrant, and of another Englishman, Lieutenant Ayherst, who was with him at the time. These murders initiated a cult in Indian politics which has never since quite disappeared. In particular, it has smirched the good name of Bengal, through the misguided patriotic fervour of some of our best youths, who have sought through anarchy and violence to gain their ends.

Mr. Tilak's party grew in volume and importance and challenged the moderate leaders when the Congress met at Surat, in Gujerat, in 1907. He had at his beck and call extremists chiefly from the Deccan and the Central Provinces, who were waiting for an opportunity to get rid of the control of the old gang. They succeeded in wrecking the Surat session of the Congress and producing a split which had long been feared. In consequence the older members of the Congress had to remodel its constitution, and therefore they reshaped the Congress creed in the following terms:—

“The objects of the Indian National Congress are the attainment by the people of India of a system of government similar to that enjoyed by the self-governing members of the British Empire, and a participation by them in the rights and responsibilities of the Empire on equal terms with those members. These objects are to be achieved by constitutional means, by bringing about a steady reform of the existing system of administration and by promoting national unity, fostering public spirit and developing and organising the intellectual, moral, economic and industrial resources of the country.”

After the introduction of the Morley-Minto Reforms,

the Hindus, who disliked the Moslem success in receiving support both from Whitehall and the Government of India with regard to their special representation, made strenuous efforts to bring them back into the Congress fold, for whereas in the 'eighties and 'nineties of last century a number of prominent Mohammedans were associated with the Congress, after the Surat split the Mohammedans had begun to drop out. This was still more evident after the All-India Moslem League was well established, and after the special consideration shown to the Mohammedans in the Morley-Minto Reforms in 1908

At the Congress of 1916 held at Lucknow a pact was made between the Mohammedans and Hindus and became known as the Lucknow Pact. According to this pact, the two great communities or religious groups, the Hindus and the Mohammedans, made an arrangement to share in fair proportion, Government offices and seats in every kind of public institution. The pact, however, was never popular with the Mohammedans, who all the time claimed that they should have a larger share, and ultimately came to the conclusion that they would get that more easily by standing on their own feet than through the help of the Hindus. It may be said that the pact pervaded Congress politics for about ten years at most; but when the machinery of the Congress passed to the control of Mr Gandhi at a special session held in Calcutta in 1920, the Mohammedans again left the movement in large numbers. In 1927, when the Congress actually adopted independence as the ultimate goal for India, not only did the Mohammedans cease to take any active part in it, with the exception of one or two here and there, but the more liberal-minded Indians became what

might be considered the right wing, and separated from that Congress.

The National Liberal Federation, consisting mainly of former Hindu adherents of Congress, although born at Bombay in August 1918, did not show much sustained activity until about 1927, when, as a counterblast to the demand of Mr. Gandhi's party for an independent India, its leaders made a strong plea for the grant of Dominion status at an early date.

After passing into the hands of Mr. Gandhi in 1920, the Congress was associated not only with the Non-Co-operation movement, afterwards known as the Civil Disobedience movement, but took under its wing, for a time at any rate, the Khilafat movement of a section of the Mohammedans who, under the garb of showing disapproval of the attitude of the British towards the Ottoman Empire, were really as extreme at heart as Mr. Gandhi himself. The late Mr. Mohamed Ali, mellowed by age and experience, was inclined to show much more tolerance towards the British before he died early in 1931 when at the Round Table Conference. In the earlier days he was a great extremist and a whole-hogger, from the point of view of the Indian National Congress.

At the Lahore session of the Congress in December 1930 a bold bid was made for complete independence—to use Mr. Gandhi's own words, "Purana Swaraj." One must therefore realise that Mr. Gandhi at the Round Table Conference in 1931 had either to make a complete *volte-face* and to get the Indian National Congress to do the same, or had to stand out for the creed or cult of independence, which certainly did not blend with any fair interpretation of views prevalent at the Conference,

whether with regard to a federal structure or the protection of minorities by special electorates or provincial autonomy.

Since the Indian National Congress to-day is not only anti-Government but anti-British, it is worth while to recapitulate by way of summary the processes by which the stage has been reached :

In 1885, when the Indian National Congress was brought into being, it was friendly to the British, tolerating them as benevolent despots. In 1907 it considered the British connection as simply desirable for the development of India on the lines of other self-governing dominions. In 1916 it was courting Mohammedan co-operation to help to give birth to an Indian nation in the real sense of the term. In 1920, emboldened by the Amritsar shootings and the unpopularity of the Rowlatt Act (afterwards repealed), it seized upon the chance of fomenting trouble over the Khilafat movement, in which the fanatical element of Indian Moslems joined only too readily. Mr. Gandhi thereupon captured the Congress and introduced the slogan of independence with the cult of hate against the British as the goal of this political body. Further, in 1930-31 there was put forward the claim of Purana Swaraj, or complete independence, which practically rules out the British connection.

Whether you can turn an Indian into an Englishman as Macaulay thought, or whether you believe with Rudyard Kipling that " East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet," you cannot get away from the fact that by teaching so emphatically the tenets of Western democracy the British have sown the wind and they must reap the whirlwind.

A very dear friend of mine, the late Sir Ashutosh Chaudhuri, whose death I still feel, for he was such a gentle and sincere soul, once said with much pathos, at a provincial conference of Congressmen, that a subject race can have no politics. This is not true in the broad sense of the term, because Indians do nothing but dream, think and talk of politics. But what are these politics? They are neither Liberal nor Conservative, but anti-Government and anti-British, because the awakening Indians underwent, through the Indian National Congress, between the years 1885 and 1907, taught them to hate themselves (a hatred which I share as bitterly as any other Indian) for being a subject race; to hate themselves because they are a dependent nation. There is nothing disloyal, nothing seditious in this spirit; but that hatred must naturally, with the march of time, develop against those who taught them those very principles of democracy and freedom, which the Indians now cherish so much. One must therefore sympathise with them rather than denounce them, for their antagonistic feelings. If to-day I do not share that anti-British feeling, it is because I know that we must face hard facts. However patriotic we may be, however much we may desire to see a free India, however proud we may be of the philosophies and religions of India, and however much we may admire the tenacity of Mr. Gandhi and appreciate his sincerity and simple-mindedness when he wages war against machinery and modern civilisation, we still must recognise the necessity for a foreign paramountcy in India until that dawn comes when Hindus and Mohammedans sink all their differences and unite to make an Indian nation. Until then, paramountcy

must be in the hands of a third party, and with all their shortcomings I would rather have the British than any other nation on the earth. Knowing the difficulties and the drawbacks of the India of to-day, and recognising all the handicaps of foreign domination, I assert that Great Britain has been, and I am sure will continue to prove to be, the best friend for India and the Indians.

The Congress, which was confined to a very small section of the *intelligentsia* when founded in 1885, has ceased to be so limited. The Gandhi movement has driven agitation fairly deep among the masses, and that is where its danger lies. Mr. Gandhi has rendered India great service by teaching the Indian labourers not to waste their idle moments and to make use of the spinning-wheel; but on the other hand he is doing a grave disservice to his country by asking the masses and the tenants in the ryotwari tracts of his own presidency to manufacture illicit salt and to withhold the payment of revenues and taxes. No Government can exist without funds, and funds legally obtainable under legislative enactment. Although we may admire Mr. Gandhi as a saint or Mahatma, we cannot forget that his Civil Disobedience movement and his Non-Co-operation movement have brought about horrible carnage, such as the 1931 massacres at Cawnpore, beside threatening paralysis of the machinery of Government and the everyday life of people in agricultural areas who exist by getting their share of the harvest. In order to put down the trouble in 1930-31, many ordinances were passed by Lord Irwin. His underlying policy was firmness tempered with conciliation, but one cannot help thinking that his Government allowed the weakening of law and order to

go on unchecked longer than was good for the prestige of Government. A strong hand at the beginning is very often more effective for a country like India, than a long-drawn-out struggle against mob rule for the maintenance of law and order.

The Irwin-Gandhi Pact of March 1931 had a brief and troubled existence, and during the Mahatma's absence at the second Indian Round Table Conference his lieutenants in India were forcing the pace. In at least three provinces the renewal of civil disobedience was imminent when Mr. Gandhi landed in Bombay on December 28, 1931. He did not stay that subversive proceeding, and in common with other members of the Working Committee of the Congress was arrested. That this step was inevitable was clear to everyone who had read in the newspapers some of the threats uttered by Mr. Gandhi, and of Congress instigation of the mischievous, unwarranted No Rent campaign, which was entirely unprovoked by the Government and the landowners.

It takes some nerve for a man in twentieth-century India to copy the life of the weaver-philosopher, Kabir, who flourished in the time of the Moguls in India, and to try to catch the imagination of the poor peasants in India by leading a simple life. Many of them have come to regard Mr. Gandhi as a twentieth-century reincarnation of the cowherd *avatar* of Vishnu, namely, Lord Sri Krishna. It is perhaps as well for the moulding of a new Constitution for India on sound lines that Mr. Gandhi's activities should have been stopped by at least his temporary disappearance from the field of Indian politics. It is very difficult to understand the mentality of a man who knows full well that, however much he

may be able to practise personally the cult of non-violence and non-co-operation, his followers are inflamed by his utterances to preach and practise open revolution and try every method in their power to subvert British rule and to flout law and authority.

For these reasons the policy of Lord Willingdon and his Government is to be welcomed by every sensible and law-abiding Indian. It is the policy of the old school of Liberalism which is unfortunately so much in a minority in British politics at present. As *The Times* has pointed out, it is the policy pursued by Lord Morley when as Secretary of State for India he had to suppress anarchy and lawlessness and at the same time go ahead with the Reforms which bore his name and that of Lord Minto.

The utterances of Sir Samuel Hoare, the present Secretary of State for India, on the subject of a firm hand are also most opportune. Lord Willingdon, whose long Indian experience befits him so well to be at the helm of affairs in India at this critical juncture, should continue to receive the support of the British Cabinet in the policy of combating disorder on the one hand and, on the other hand, holding out the olive branch to those who are willing to co-operate with the British Government in its sincere desire to advance the interests of India and to give it a new Constitution, with as much provision for responsible self-government, both in the central and provincial governments, as may be feasible.

It is the prospect of great constitutional change which has led Hindus and Mahommedans into such a struggle for power—perhaps for existence—each community spurred by pride and religion, and by the remembrance of the culture and splendour of the past, for each fears

that unless it can predominate, it will be enslaved. In consequence, one side is pinning its faith on the superiority of numbers, while the other is depending on separate electorates, as a foundation, and, if the worst came to the worst, on weightage by help from across the frontier.

Across the borders we have to look for the menace that may come from Afghanistan, Persia and Turkey taking a hand in the new game for power in India. This would mean reverting to a form of absolute rule, which I am sure that no one desires to see, and to which the British cannot go back, after all the principles which they have preached and are now practising by the forms of democratic government in the West. There is also the Russian menace. The shadow of the Bear with its claws ready to tear the Pathan and Hindu alike, should the hand of the British be removed from India, is indeed more than a shadow. It is a grim reality.

Whilst a European nation such as Germany of old might have shown malevolent neutrality towards the British in India, and whilst the Yellow Peril of to-day may be a greater peril both to Asia and to Europe than Napoleon the Great would have thought possible, Russia has been, and will continue to be, a menace to India. I read only a few months ago an article in a Bolshevist Moscow paper which advocated the following plans.

Complete independence for India by the violent destruction of British authority. Abolition of all debts. Nationalisation of all British enterprises, banks, railways, shipping and plantations. Establishment of a Soviet Government. Destruction of native principalities. Creation of an Indian Federation of Soviet Republics. Confiscation without compensation of all

lands belonging to landlords, Native Princes, churches, the British Government and officials. Cancellation of all contracts and peasants' debts to banks.

If such a programme was adopted in India, apart from the cessation of British rule and the negation of all tranquillity and peace, it would mean the uprooting of the land revenue system of the country. It would not only stamp out the big Indian States and the big landholders, but in British India it would obliterate the intermediate landlords and tenure-holders who are the bulwark in a province such as Bengal, and wipe them off the face of India. It would create the authority of the new peasantry, who, uneducated and unable to cope with the situation, would soon reduce India to a state of chronic famine and distress and utter chaos in the end.

I have never visited Russia and it may be that for Russian conditions the present mode of Government, since people are tolerating it, is suitable. When, however, it is seen that Indians who have tired of British rule desire to achieve independence by the aid of outside sympathisers, and from Soviet Russia, one understands what a great danger to India this Bolshevist movement is.

The antidote of steady constitutional progress is essential. It is requisite to find a *via media* by which there may be Indianisation of the new administration as far as may be possible, provincial autonomy and a strong central Government, whether completely federal or otherwise. Otherwise we may face chaos of inconceivable magnitude. (The policy of the mailed fist, and the mailed fist only, towards Indians by the British would be as antiquated and as obsolete as the demand of Indians for

independence is unpractical and tantamount to madness. There is only one thing to be done. In close co-operation with the British the Indians must not only deserve what they desire, but they must rely on the fairness and justice of the British nation. We know from past experience that whereas Great Britain may, when occasion demands, be ruthless to her enemies, she can also be generous—generous to a fault perhaps. It is such generous magnanimity that has turned a hostile country into a prosperous Union of South Africa—one of the greatest achievements of the present century. Although the result of the American War of Independence may have been best for the United States, it is a pity that there was no far-sighted and magnanimous British statesman of outstanding influence at that time, for had there been, America might have been to-day a part and parcel of the British Commonwealth of Nations, a part glorifying the whole, with the British Isles as the pivot or sun of a vast and beneficent political system.

Such political parties as the Indian National Congress exist more to disseminate hatred against the ruling authority than to think about and work for the good of India itself and to assist in a constructive programme. Unless, therefore, real responsibility is transferred to the shoulders of the people, and a national spirit is engendered in the legislative bodies, such an organisation is bound to become more and more a menace to peace and progress in India—a weapon to arouse sections of the masses to fury, and force them to withhold legitimate dues of Government, such as land revenue or taxes payable to local bodies such as municipalities and county councils, not to speak of the harassment that has been inflicted on

landholders and other intermediaries in collecting their rents and dues from the tenantry.

The dislocation of trade and industry by civil disobedience has brought about an economic situation fraught with great danger to the Government and the people alike. The sooner responsible self-government is introduced, the better for India and the better for the British, for we want to see the real birth of parties, if there is to be a parliamentary system at all and not bodies and organisations whose sole aim is to try and drive the British out of India. The success of the latter would be disastrous and would lead to chaos and carnage.

CHAPTER VI

THE SPIRIT OF INDIA

IN view of the Westernisation of political thought in Hindustan, let us consider the spirit of India and how far Western influence can permeate the lives of her peoples. It should be clearly understood that my remarks ought not to be misconstrued as in any way belittling the customs and institutions of the West on the one hand, or my own countrymen for any existing practices and customs on the other hand. Any observations that might seem to bear such a construction should be taken with a sense of humour and that breadth of view so necessary to understand the Indian situation.

The spirit of India is the spirit of Asia, the spirit of the East, and can never be the spirit of the West. India's geographical position, her climate, her races, her philosophies, creeds and castes are all against so great a change. I give certain examples, and whether they be considered incongruities or startling contrasts, I shall leave my readers to judge, but let us begin with a test which cannot be seriously refuted or questioned.

The three-fifths of India known as "British" consists of about sixteen hundred towns and about four hundred and ninety-eight thousand villages. The number of persons in these towns (1921 Census) is over 25,000,000 with no less than 225,000,000 in the villages. The

number of persons supported by pasture and agriculture (and here I must include the population of the Indian States) is about 300,000,000, whereas the population in the industrial areas of India comes to somewhere about 33,000,000 or 34,000,000. In a study of the social and economic conditions of these people we find that whereas literacy is less than 200 in every 1,000 of the population, the English-speaking section of that literate population is about 200 or a little less in every 10,000 persons.

Granting the fact that the spread of English, as the language of the ruling race, has been remarkable, in view of the total literacy in India, let us take two tests. In spite of the fact that, say, 175 males out of every 10,000, and only 25 females out of every 10,000 of the population can read and write English, how many of them have adopted the Western modes of living and Western social customs? How many of those 25 Indian women literate in English out of every 10,000 have gained an emancipation which is Western in colouring? The estimates that I shall now give will be conjectural, and may in some cases be completely wide of the mark. Let us suppose that out of the 175 males in every 10,000, 100 have adopted the English mode of dress, and can speak English. Let it not be imagined that these 100 use only spoons and forks and have their meals at a table, as the people of the West. Perhaps ten or fifteen out of the 175 men referred to may, from a mistaken idea of respectability or on account of exigencies over which they can have no control, or by preference, eat or dress in the European manner. The remainder not only don their national costume but prefer to have their meals in

Indian fashion, and in most cases squatting on the floor and using their hands, for even the most Westernised and the most advanced Indians (among whom I might perhaps include my own family and myself) prefer Indian food and the Indian mode of eating when they have the opportunity.

Of the 25 in every 10,000 women who are supposed to be literate or can read and write in English, the percentage following Western fashions may be about the same as the males; for it is only among the men who have become anglicised that the slow emancipation of their women has reached a standard where, in some sense, some of them may be said to eat, drink and make merry in the way of Western women. But even to-day Indians do not possess dancing-halls or cabarets, much less night clubs (thank God!) like the cities of Europe or those of America. Many an educated Indian looks aghast and with a disapproving eye when he finds a daughter of one of his best friends has taken up dancing as a social recreation. In this respect the Indian mentality is as primitive and singular to-day as it was in the 'seventies of the last century, and I hope I may be forgiven for telling a story of those times in this connection.

During the term of one of the most brilliant and erudite of Viceroys, an Envoy was sent from Kabul, by the Ameer of Afghanistan, to discuss certain questions of British policy towards that country. The Viceregal staff thought it would be an excellent idea to give a State ball in honour of the distinguished guest. When the ball was in progress the Afghan Envoy, who did not know a word of English, had it conveyed to H.E. the Viceroy, through the medium of an interpreter, that he was

delighted and much touched at the care and thoughtfulness of H.E. the Viceroy in getting together so many beautiful white dancing girls to entertain him. (The women who dance in India are not thought to be respectable in any way by the gentlefolk of the country.) The Viceroy was horrified on hearing the impression the Envoy had of English society ladies at that ball, and put his foot into it still more by explaining to the Envoy that these ladies were the wives, daughters and sisters of the highest British officials in India, and of the members of the Viceregal staff, and were not dancing girls. The result was anything but happy, for the Envoy immediately made preparations to leave Calcutta, ashamed to think that the Viceroy and Governor-General of India should have gone to such lengths to impress and please by entertaining the Envoy of a neighbouring and friendly State, as to bring his own womenfolk to dance in front of him. Here is a lesson to ponder.

One realises that being able to read, write and speak the language of the British race is no criterion that the Indian has become so saturated with Westernism as to be able to look at India through a pair of Western spectacles. Hence it is most unfair for social reformers from England and America to sneer at the people of India or blame the British Government for the slow progress that Indians have made in education, sanitation and medicine, according to Western standards. In the West few can understand the enormous difficulties that we Indians have to face, specially those of us who, under the influence of Western culture, wish to introduce in most walks of life the emancipated ideas of the West.

I have no intention to start any controversy or to say

any unkind words of Dr. Katherine Mayo, who in her desire to show the contrasts between East and West, and forgetting the common courtesy expected from Western visitors to the East, marshalled facts in her book *Mother India* which showed antipathy rather than tolerance, and gave sneers rather than sympathy. She thereby brought against herself an antagonism of educated India which could so easily have been avoided, while her valuable suggestions and advice might have been welcomed. I am very sorry indeed for the line that Dr. Mayo took. A recent publication called *The Key of Progress* (Oxford University Press) comprised a survey of the status and condition of women in India, contributed by several well-known people with a foreword by Lady Irwin. Some of the most glaring instances of the defects and backwardness of Indian women, whether in child welfare or with regard to the principles of health and hygiene as understood in the West, have been treated with such candour and such authority that the book brings out forcibly all that India lacks in these things; but it has been written in a spirit of friendly co-operation. This has made a world of difference in the reception that it has had from all thoughtful and patriotic Indians in comparison with Miss Mayo's writings.

I know full well what ignorance exists in my own country, what social ostracism very often means to people who have neither money enough nor position to fight those who have the power of excommunication. I know full well the woes of Hindu widowhood. Yet as an advocate for the emancipation of women in India I sometimes wonder whether, in spite of what is said and written against the purdah system, it is altogether evil. It is a very

debatable point whether the highly placed Hindu or Mohammedan lady, or the wife of a Ruling Prince, who has been given the comforts and amenities of Western life and who does not observe purdah too rigidly, would really be happier if she came out altogether into the anglicised world of to-day, where the English language and Western ideas are more used to gain political rights or to enhance one's social status in European society than to replace the Eastern modes of living by Western innovations.

In the last few years I have seen quite a few Indian ladies of good position who have had to make London their home owing to their husbands holding official positions there, and who have been very brave indeed not only to overcome some of their earlier prejudices (for many of them came out of purdah or seclusion when they were no longer young), but to face climatic conditions and modes of living very different to their home life. To any observant person it was obvious that some of them at least could not really have been happy in their exiled environment. Great as the need is for fuller emancipation of Indian women, the subject must be tackled much more from an Indian than an English or Western standpoint.

We in India are so much "up against" prejudice and customs that our outlook has naturally to be very different from that of the West, where liberty and comfort, under the garb of civilisation, are sought after to such a degree that a quotation of Disraeli's will perhaps not be out of place here. "The European talks of progress because by the aid of a few scientific discoveries he has established a society which has mistaken comfort for civilisation."

That is the reason why I deprecated very strongly the propaganda of a section of the London Press in exhibiting

posters and jokes in vulgar taste about Mr. Gandhi. Mr. Gandhi is sincere about wearing his loin-cloth as a symbol of simplicity and poverty, and Indians admire him for it; for in India the mere wearing of clothes does not make a gentlemen, nor give the hall-mark of civilisation. The lesson the West should learn from the sartorial preferences of Mr. Gandhi, a man who in his youth imbibed Western ideas of civilisation and once practised them, is that of the utter unsuitability of the spirit of India to the social culture of the West. As Saint Nihal Singh writes in one of his works :—

“The people in general are becoming more and more dissatisfied with being turned into mock Englishmen. An ever-deepening national impulse is compelling India to go back to the fount of her own traditions and her own culture, to insist upon developing along her own lines so that she may be able to contribute to the knowledge of the world instead of being merely a recipient of such knowledge as may be vouchsafed to her.”

Mr. K. M. Pannikkar, an M.A. of Oxford and secretary to the Indian States Delegation at the second session of the Round Table Conference wrote :—

“In India the West has for a long time cast an ever-lengthening shadow upon national life. . . . Educated men who aspired to be leaders of society and thought twenty years ago, ostentatiously cast aside their Indian character. In dress, in manner, in forms of thought and expression, in literary and artistic activities, in fact in almost all aspects of national life, the attempt was to Westernise. The cultural traditions of the past were completely forgotten. Without being consciously aware of it, our thought is dominated by the West. Hating it with all our heart we may not yet get away from it.”

These quotations show the revolt of the spirit of the East against the culture of the West.

This chapter would not be complete without reference to the religious problem of India, outside the Hindu-Moslem question. The Brahmins still hold sway over the lives of the Hindus in India, and when matters of social reform come up before legislative bodies, it is the Brahmins who are, in most cases, against such reforms. Side by side with this fact account has to be taken not only of the ignorance of the masses but also of the prejudices ingrained in the minds of educated Indians themselves, whether they have a knowledge of Western customs or not.

However much an Indian may be steeped in many of the ideas of the West, and however much he may know of his handicaps, he has to face facts. In most centres of Hinduism in India, where there are Hindu widows, even to-day, unless absolutely forced by circumstances of health to do so, they would prefer to drink water out of wells and tanks, even in towns where waterworks exist, rather than the water which comes through pipes in cities, for to the orthodox Hindu mind the system of filtration and water passing through pipes is a pollution. Similarly, many Hindu widows object to taking any European form of medicine because there may be spirits or animal products in such medicines, and what I say about Hindu widows, in this connection, applies equally to old men of the very old school.

Many high-caste Hindus, whether they be Brahmins or not, whilst their own caste regulations may permit them to have people belonging to the Sudra or lower class to help to cook some of the things in a Hindu kitchen, would at once run the risk of excommunication if they were to eat with men of other castes and allow them to come into the kitchen.

Whether it be fortunate or not we, the Hindus, do not possess the innumerable divorce courts which are a feature of the West, and our traditional conceptions would give little scope for them. We find, too, that in such matters as raising the age of consent, trying to bring in divorce laws or advocating widow marriage (a practice which fortunately is growing since widow marriage was legalised in the 'nineties of the last century), any reformer runs the risk of social ostracism even from some of the most highly educated and respected Indians.

I was surprised to find that my friend Pandit M. M. Malaviya was able to come to London as a representative of the group of Indian National Congress delegates with Mr. Gandhi, for he is not only the most orthodox of the orthodox, but has a very large following in orthodox India. I well remember him as a colleague in the days of the Imperial Legislative Councils, after the Morley-Minto Reforms came into existence in India, when to satisfy his followers or his own religious beliefs he had very often, after a session of the Legislative Councils, whether in Calcutta or at Simla, to undergo certain ceremonies of purification at the holy city of Benares, where he is such a well-known and prominent figure, as well as in his native city of Allahabad or Prayag. It was a great act of courage on his part to journey to England, for caste prejudices and scruples pervade the whole strata of Indian society irrespective of literacy or otherwise.

The religious differences that exist among the various Hindu sects, are well known. By exercise of the powers that the British Government possess to preserve law and order, religious factions amongst the Hindus have become less every day. The fights between various sects of

Sanyasis and Sadhus, which were a regular feature in India as recently as the 'thirties and 'forties of the last century, thanks to British rule have become less and less; but one cannot say what might happen if the strong hand that tries to keep an equal balance were to be removed to-morrow.

All these considerations show the difficulty of judging the civilisation of India from the Western standpoint. I cannot help feeling that the initial mistake that the British made was to introduce the high technicalities of Western democracy into India's politics, which in the structure of government should have been discarded at the very beginning as being unsuited to the Indian soil and the Indian mind. Benevolent despotism is an Eastern heritage and is understood well. Although it is too late in the day to think of such a system now, the creation of various forms of oligarchy, which so-called democracy may mean, will still leave the masses untouched and unmoved, as it lacks the imagination of the East, and whilst giving powers to those who can use their vocal organs well, will only serve to create newer difficulties in many unlooked-for corners.

The problem of the rising tide of colour is one on which an American writer, Lothrop Stoddart, has waxed eloquent, in his book of that name. What do all those who are anxious to safeguard the superiority of the white races over the brown, black and yellow races really mean? To my mind this attitude conveys a fear of being stamped out by the numerical strength of the races who are not white. If this is the spirit in which emancipated nations like America are going to tackle these problems, then we Indians can really have no true sympathisers in any of

the Western countries, and that is why I say "Thank God!" that we have the British to take care of our destinies; for however narrow some of the Britishers may be, and however desirous some of them may be to keep Indians back from a national heritage, we have had at the British-Indian Round Table Conference in London the three parties of British politics represented. I am thankful that this was so, for India can neither be made a racial nor a party question, if England truly desires to live up to the part she has created for herself in India, namely, that of sole trustee of the welfare and advance of the Indian peoples. That is why, so far as the rising tide of colour is concerned, I trust that in the India of the future we shall not have those extremes of hatred, bestial and cruel incidents which sometimes smirch the good name of America, however different and difficult race problems may be in that country.

In India we have much more to fear for our own sake the influences of Bolshevism on the west and north, and the present forces that are at work in China and Japan. Many historians have emphasised the fact that the awakening in India of to-day dates back to the time when an Eastern nation, Japan, defeated Russia and when the Indians fought side by side with Englishmen and detachments of the white army coming from the British Dominions, and found that they were just as good fighters as their white brethren. But, however true these facts may be, we have to face realities. These realities bring us to the question of the aspects of Bolshevism that are a danger not only to the British in India but to the Indians themselves. Some of those ideas of Bolshevism have permeated and penetrated the Celestial Empire.

I must guard against distorting perspectives by accentuating extremes. One must not believe too much of what one reads and hears about Bolshevist Russia of to-day. There are certain aspects, however, which must be mentioned in order to develop my ideas and which are I believe true. Let us first of all remember that Russia, or the greater part of it, is an Asiatic nation, and that it has a mystic outlook and belief in the supernatural similar to that of India.

I remember reading, when I was a lad, a book called *The Unknown Life of Christ* which was written by a Russian and translated into English, and which tried to prove that Christ had spent a number of years in a Tibetan monastery and had visited India. I remember how much some of my elders were impressed by reading this volume at the time and how popular it was in India.

One has heard of the Theosophical movement in India, as it has become a world movement. One of the greatest Theosophists was Mme. Blavatsky, a mysterious Russian, whose memory is held in great affection and esteem by Indian Theosophists to-day, although she long since left her material body for an astral body, according to the belief of her followers.

The citing of these examples shows the affinity of Russia with the Eastern mind in the past, but in the Russia of to-day we see that whereas the State religion of Bolshevist Russia may be called atheistical, it has a corrective in the ikon worship of the peasants. We know that in Bolshevism, or at least in many sides of Bolshevism, abnormality is the keynote. One writer has been bold enough to assert "that Bolshevism thrives on dirt, disease and abnormal conditions." Whether this is an exaggeration

or not I cannot say, but supposing that there were grains of truth in it, and knowing as we do that Bolshevism has declared that atheism in whatever shape or form is to be the State religion of Russia, what would be the effect if such doctrines were to penetrate India?

We may say, of course, that Brahminism would put up a strong fight. One knows that missionary enthusiasts, by which I mean Christian missionaries in the East and in India, have often done harm in their ardour to proselytise, but the mischief that this has caused has been of a minor character, for converts have often been confined to castes and sects which are very low on the Indian social ladder and are chiefly among the Depressed Classes. In the Bolshevik Russia of to-day, in spite of this atheism being the proclaimed religion of the Russian Government, one finds that in the spirit of the revolution, ikon worship has been cleverly entwined. A few years ago, reading in a book by Launcelot Lawton dealing with the spirit of the revolution, I came across the following words :—

“ The face of the ikon tells us everything about the Russian ; for it is the creation of an art that is struggling to unite Heaven and Earth, and to harmonise two souls, the Eastern and the Western, the expression of pagan severity (or perhaps sincerity) that is shining through the sorrowful mists of Christian resignation. From whence then, it may be asked, comes the Revolution, with all its blood and filth? From the triumph of austerity in the struggle against resignation.”

Supposing this spirit were to envelop the Indian peasant folk, steeped in ignorance and superstition as they are even after 150 years of British connection; whilst Brahminism would fight this new evil at first, it would perhaps seize upon ikon worship as a new cult and canonise

some of the revolutionary figures of Soviet Russia as new avatars.

However much Indians may desire to have an Indian India based on Eastern traditions rather than on Western principles, they are not blind to the fact that some of the crude forms of superstition and idolatry that exist at the present moment are great hindrances to the march of progress. Therefore the introduction of such a spirit from Russia and such teaching would be dangerous to India herself.

A passing reference to the marriage and divorce laws in Bolshevik Russia may not be out of place. When there is so much opposition in India to change the social laws of the country with regard to the introduction of divorce or the prohibition of child marriage, I cannot imagine any of the followers of the Hindu laws of succession adopting the following principles which are said to prevail in the Soviet Russia of to-day :—

“ There is no such thing as illegitimacy in Soviet Russia. Soviet law says : ‘ A child is a fact and the basis of the family. There is no difference between a child of the married and a child of the unmarried.’ ”

Such doctrines introduced to India, with her complicated joint family system and her laws of succession, and put into practice, would be like dynamite. Such doctrines would at once crumble away the very fabric of castes and communities on which Indian society is based and must continue to be based if Hinduism is to exist in India. It is, therefore, clear that that band of young men who style themselves the Youth Movement will be doing a great disservice and will be introducing a very great danger to India by adopting any of the principles of Bolshevik

Russia, whether it be in respect to the system of government, the existing system of landlords and tenants, or in the regions of social and religious custom

As regards the influence of China and Japan, China is still an unknown quantity even in the twentieth century. One half of China may not know what the other half is doing. Torn by internecine warfare, it is struggling to set up a new house for itself; but one thing is clear and that is, that the spirit of Bolshevism is rampant in many parts of China to-day.

Japan, which at one time was called the England of the East, is watching with wide-open eyes, watching for its opportunity as an ambitious nation, not only the lay of the land of its neighbour, China, but the whole of the Asiatic movement and that of India. One has therefore to consider that for future security India's safest course is to be able to raise herself from her present position of dependency to that of a self-governing country under the ægis and with the help of the British.

CHAPTER VII

INDIA AS A BRITISH DOMINION

HAVING considered the position of India to-day we come to the question whether India can remain a part of the British Empire, and if so, what is to be her future position in that Empire. As against those few in England who, in season and out of season, show an unsympathetic attitude to Indian aspirations and, whenever there is any disturbance in India, advocate the baton or the rifle, there are many in the British Isles, and most certainly the majority of those who have to carry on the everyday administration in India, who realise that India is suffering from ailments which are in some respects world-wide and in others are a natural outcome of the democratic principles she has been steadily assimilating since she passed from the hands of the East India Company to the British Crown.

Before the Great War it might have been asserted that there was still in the minds of British administrators an idea that in spite of the great Declaration of Queen Victoria in 1858, India should continue to be held by the British by the sword, but this was definitely removed by the famous announcement in Parliament on August 20, 1917, which runs as follows:—

“ The policy of His Majesty's Government, with which the Government of India are in complete accord, is that of the

increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire."

This policy was further expounded by the statement of Lord Irwin on October 29, 1929, when he was authorised to state, "that in the judgment of His Majesty's Government it is implicit in the Declaration of 1917 that the natural issue of India's constitutional progress as there contemplated is the attainment of Dominion status." In due course there followed the categorical statements of the Prime Minister in closing the first session of the Round Table Conference on January 19, 1931, and the second on the following December 1.

These various proclamations and pronouncements and the constitutional reforms effected or projected have induced Indians to seek for a new kind of self-respect and to desire to convert a sub-continent inhabited by congeries of races and peoples in a state of the highest culture and civilisation on the one hand, and crass ignorance and superstition on the other, into one single nation.

After all, such a development was foreseen more than a century ago by some of the earlier administrators of British India. Thus Lord Elphinstone wrote in 1819 as follows :—

"If we can manage our native army, and keep out the Russians, I see nothing to threaten the safety of our Empire—until the natives become enlightened under our tuition, and a separation becomes desirable to both parties."

Sir Thomas Munro, sometime Governor of Madras, wrote in 1824 in similar strain :—

"We should look upon India not as a temporary possession, but as one which is to be maintained permanently, until the natives shall, in some future age, have abandoned most of their superstitions and prejudices, and become sufficiently enlightened to frame a regular government for themselves, and conduct and preserve it. Whenever such a time shall arrive, it will probably be best for both countries that the British control over India should be gradually withdrawn. That the desirable change may in some after age be effected in India there is no cause to despair. Such a change was at one time in Britain itself at least as hopeless as it is here. When we reflect how much the character of nations has always been influenced by that of governments, and that some, once the most cultivated, have sunk into barbarism, while others, formerly the rudest, have attained the highest point of civilisation, we shall see no reason to doubt that if we pursue steadily the proper measures we shall in time so far improve the character of our Indian subjects as to enable them to govern and protect themselves."

These statesmen of the early years of British rule foresaw the day when, under British guidance, Indians would want to govern themselves, and in wishing to do so they would seek to replace the very people who had taught them the love of liberty and equality. Englishmen can no longer dream of holding India by force. What Meredith Townend, the gifted joint editor of the *Spectator* of the late Victorian era, wrote in his book *England and Asia* at the end of last century, is perhaps truer to-day than when he wrote it, although the figures of the white population in India may have increased since then :—

"The English think they will rule India for many centuries or for ever. I do not think so, holding rather the older belief that the empire which came in a day will disappear in a night. . . . Above all this inconceivable mass of humanity, governing

all, protecting all, taxing all, rises what we call here 'the Empire,' a corporation of less than 1,500 men, partly chosen by examination, partly by co-optation, who are set to govern, and who protect themselves in governing by finding pay for a minute garrison of 65,000 men, one-fifth of the Roman legions—though the masses to be controlled are double the subjects of Rome. That corporation and that garrison constitute the 'Indian Empire.' There is nothing else. Banish those 1,500 men in black, defeat that slender garrison in red, and the empire has ended, the structure disappears, and brown India emerges, unchanged and unchangeable. To support the official world and its garrison—both, recollect, smaller than those of Belgium—there is, except Indian opinion, absolutely nothing. Not only is there no white race in India, not only is there no white colony, but there is no white man who purposes to remain. . . . There are no white servants, not even grooms, no white policemen, no white postmen, no white anything. If the brown men struck for a week, the 'Empire' would collapse like a house of cards, and every ruling man would be a starving prisoner in his own house. He could not move himself or get water."

The fact is that Britain can only go on holding India with India's good-will. There can be no doubt that Indians, both Hindus and Mohammedans, have grown tired of the present form of government, which has given them power of criticism without responsibility—not an enviable situation to be in for any people in the world. Whatever new constitution may be evolved, whatever safeguards may be introduced, however long a standing army may be necessary to protect India against raids over the frontier; however long the British Navy may have to protect Indian shores, as it does those of the Dominions, and however long the Crown may have to administer, through a Viceroy, relations with foreign Powers or with the States commonly called "Indian

India"—one thing is certain, namely, that the goal of full responsibility or something in the region of a Dominion status must now be a question of years or decades rather than of centuries. In consequence, the British Government is faced with difficulties, especially as it has tied itself in knots by using such expressions as "responsible self-government," and "Dominion status." Such terms are not easily applied to Indian conditions, for the elements of an Empire are still very strong in India, whereas the ingredients that go to make a Dominion are few and very complicated.

As Lord Zetland said when reading a very thoughtful paper on the work of the first Round Table Conference at a meeting of the East India Association in May 1931:—¹

"You cannot put back the hands of the clock; you cannot dam up the forces of evolution. What you can do is to endeavour to guide them along safe channels, and you can only do that with any hope of success by negotiation and by agreement."

But great caution and greater thought is necessary in future advances, for I agree with the same noble Marquess when, speaking on another occasion at the East India Association in July 1930, after the publication of the Simon Commission's report,² he said:—

"You cannot build up a working Constitution on catch phrases, however attractive. Such phrases as 'self-determination,' 'provincial autonomy,' 'Dominion status,' and so on, give expression to abstract ideas. Such ideas may be admirable as indicating the goal at which you desire to aim; but they are useless if you try to use them as bricks in the erection of the edifice which you desire to build. To pave

¹ See *Asiatic Review*, July 1931.

² *Ibid.*, October 1930.

the way to the goal at which you aim, you must employ not abstract ideas, but concrete and practicable proposals."

It has been a great compliment to India to be made an original member of the League of Nations and to have representatives at the Imperial Conferences held in London; but such privileges do not go sufficiently far to guarantee to Indians equal citizenship in the British Empire with the Dominions. Moreover, there are the very real difficulties of the problem of Indian settlers in various parts of the African continent, and, though in a lesser degree, in some of the other Dominions. One can readily understand how galling and how humiliating it is to every educated Indian to-day to note that when a very ordinary colonial or a citizen of one of the Dominions pays a visit to India, he can enjoy equal rights with the English as belonging to the same race or stock, while Indians themselves may find so much deprivation of ordinary civic rights in the country to which they have emigrated. Moreover, there are the indignities the Indian has sometimes to suffer in his own country as not belonging to the white race.

It is clear, therefore, that if the British want a true feeling of pride to be engendered in the hearts of Indians, a genuine desire to belong to the British Commonwealth of Nations, it is not enough simply to tell Indians that, as they cannot do without the British, they must patiently wait for the day when their country may be thought ripe to enter the federation, known as the British Commonwealth of Nations. Indians must feel that the entry, to be real, must put them in everything on a footing of equality with the Dominions, and that their not belonging to the white race is no handicap.

I remember in this connection a speech by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru at the Imperial Conference of 1923, in which he expressed these sentiments :—

“ I am fighting the cause of my country, and the Premiers of the various Dominions, who have in their day fought the cause of their country, will not object if I fight the cause of mine. But I do fight, let me tell you frankly, as a subject of King George, and I fight for a place in his household, and I will not be content with a place in his stables.”

Readers will appreciate how keenly Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru must have felt for himself and for his countrymen and how much every Indian feels to-day the desire to belong to the British Commonwealth of Nations, not as a subject race, in the sense that a subject race is understood. Met in the right way and by give and take, the saner Indian sections would rally round the Flag. In another part of the speech Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru says :—

“ Do not forget that my country, India, is the one country which makes the British Empire truly Imperial. I take pride in that. I do not indulge in the slightest degree in reflection upon the dignity or honour or position of any one of the Dominions, but I do claim that it is my country which makes the British Empire truly Imperial. One-fifth of the human race, with a far more ancient civilisation than your own, to which eloquent reference has been made by Lord Peel, joins with you in acknowledging the suzerainty of our common Throne. That allegiance with us is a real living thing. Shake that allegiance, and you shake the foundations of the entire fabric, with consequences which it is difficult to over-estimate.”

Race hatred and class warfare are bad for the progress of the human race anywhere, and particularly so in India, where, when the Government is alien both in religion and spirit to the inhabitants, it can only carry on with mutual

good-will and co-operation. Whilst I deprecate strongly Mr. Gandhi's preachings, when he calls the Government satanic, or when some of his utterances generate so much hate and distrust against the British in the minds of the ignorant and the fanatical, that they lead to bloodshed, I cannot pass over in silence the great disservice that a certain section of the Press in England has been doing to the British cause in India. It not only holds up to ridicule a man who, whatever his political views may be, and whatever his garb, has a great hold on the imagination of a large section of the masses in India, but at every conceivable opportunity it belittles Indians in general, and whenever any disturbance takes place in India it advocates strong military measures without trusting the man on the spot.

As to the better treatment of Indians in the Colonies and Dominions, it must be said that both the Government of India and the Home Government have done a great deal and things are better than they were, although it will take time to change the laws and outlook of some of the Dominions. If this question could be settled once for all, an enormous strength would be given to the saner and more moderate politicians in India to stand up against the extreme sections, who ridicule them by declaring that they get kicks and insults more than favours and honours by supporting the British cause.

Coming as these views do from one who has never belonged to any political party in India, and who certainly has no bias against the British, they will help readers to realise how important it is to win over Indian sentiment by meting out equality of treatment to Indians in all parts of the Empire. I know these questions bristle with

difficulties, specially as the Indian element in many of these Colonies is made up not only of men who are educated in the real sense of the term, or who can read and write English, but of ordinary labourers, whom we call coolies in India. But that is no reason why in a particular Dominion within the British Empire there should be different compartments reserved in the railways for Indians, that they must have different dentists and different hotels, that they must not walk in certain streets and so forth.

The position of Indians in such a Dominion is as bad as, if not worse than, that of some of the Untouchable Classes in India. When the loyal section of Indians want to support the British connection and the British administration, they naturally have no argument regarding this kind of treatment meted out to many of their own countrymen in one of the British Dominions. It was for that reason that Mr. Gandhi's campaign over the Natal Indian labour question and the treatment of Indians generally in South Africa awakened so strongly the sentiments of Indians of all shades and classes. So long as this sort of thing cannot be remedied, it is futile to expect Indians generally to be enthusiastic about belonging to the British Commonwealth of Nations. Of course it must be realised that every section of Indians that has gone to the Colonies cannot be given equal rights or equal treatment, as they do not have such equality in their own country; but I cannot help thinking that here is one of the sorest points that Indians have with regard to continuing the British connection. That is why Mr. Gandhi and others are able to make so much capital out of these undoubted grievances. India, as now placed,

cannot enter into a policy of retaliation as some of its extreme leaders seem to advocate, but I hope that if the Dominions are as keen as the mother-country to give fair play to the Indians and to raise their status, they will see the need for an equality basis in the Dominions. Then thoughtful Indians, assured of fair play all over the British Commonwealth, will want the British administration to continue and will gladly grant privileges to British merchants and tradespeople in India, for the future prosperity of the land and for mutual good-will. I feel strongly that the hatchet of race hatred must be buried deep, so that it may not be brought to the surface after the new Constitution has been introduced and non-co-operation and boycott be started all over again.

When Mr. Gandhi takes upon himself to be the Dictator of India and says, whether sincerely or crazily, that from the Viceroy downwards no one must be given more than Rs. 500 a month as salary, one wonders what is really behind all this talk. He must realise, as anyone else, that in India bribery and corruption prevailed to an enormous extent in the declining days of Mogul rule, and is still to be found unfortunately in some of the Indian principalities, if not in some shape or other even in the British administration itself. That fact is that if India paid her highest officials low salaries, instead of primitiveness, there would come across the whole face of the country such a state of misrule through bribery and corruption that it would be hard to believe that any progress had ever been achieved. In every country the principal officials should be sufficiently paid to be, like Cæsar's wife, above suspicion.

It is to England that India owes her splendid railway system, comprising within 75 years of the first lines nearly

42,000 miles of open railway track. India is the third country in the world in possessing so vast a network of railway communication. Next to the United States of America, India is the largest territory in the world to enjoy internal free trade. When, therefore, Indian merchants and traders show an impatience to get the trade out of European hands they are apt to forget that they can get more by co-operation than by competition. The recent effort to monopolise the coastal shipping of India and to get it out of British hands is a case in point. To use political means to transfer progressively this coastal shipping to Indian firms can only handicap the relation between the two commercial bodies, British and Indian, which through co-operation alone has advanced on sound economic grounds.

Peace, mutual trust and co-operation, guarantees and opportunities in the way of outlay of wealth and the utilisation of skilled labour and expert knowledge alone can bring economic prosperity to a country. Whilst discriminatory trading privileges are being sought after by Indians to-day without halting to think what they might bring in their train, it is more than a tragedy that Indians do not pay greater attention to the economic soundness of India, which alone has brought prosperity to the land since India passed into the hands of the Crown in 1858.

A nation like the United States of America, thriving on banking, industry and commerce and a world-wide trade, must realise how essential it is for India's credit to be good in the eyes of the world. I feel that that credit is only safe under British guidance at present. For India, to be able to keep alive agricultural labour and at the

same time to build up an industrial population drawn from the village is a problem which only an industrial nation like Great Britain can tackle.¹ Indians have to be careful that in their passionate frenzy for political freedom they do not wreck the splendid structure for industry that has been built by British and Western enterprise within the last sixty or seventy years of uninterrupted peace and progress.

That is why one feels so despondent at times, that whilst there is all this fight for rights of minorities, the reservation of seats for Touchables or Untouchables, and the claims of the Moslems as against the Hindus, it is to the British official and the British merchant that one has to look for leadership in the betterment of housing for Indian industrial labour, and raising the Indian worker to a higher level of efficiency. It must always be remembered that the population of India has expanded under British rule, and only within the last decade India has added over 32 millions or 10·6 per cent. to her already teeming multitude.

Should one put a straight question to me: "Can England afford to lose India or can India do without England?" my answer would be a bigger "No" for the Indian side than for the British. Recently Sir Victor Sassoon, a big Bombay merchant, stated that he would withdraw from India to the Far East. If British capitalists generally, who have sunk their money in India decided even at great losses to themselves to take it out of India, where would the British Government then be and what would the British Parliament go on doing for India?

¹ In this connection see Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India, 1931, Cmd. 3883.

Supposing the British left, lock, stock and barrel, apart from the internal civil war that is bound to take place in India, can it be imagined that in spite of all the Leagues of Nations and all the Disarmament Conferences, that other big Powers in the world would go on watching disinterestedly the state of affairs in India?

It is clear to me that should the British withdraw, India, instead of becoming independent, would enter a new phase of dependency under some other Power and would be leaping from the frying-pan into the fire. For the Indians it would be much worse than all the handicaps which they inevitably suffer under a foreign yoke, however just and fair the rulers may try to be.

We come back then to the conclusion that India must continue to be an integral part of the British Empire. The attainment of Dominion status is not easy with the big block of India of the States, the rulers of which, however much they may desire to come into a federal scheme, are bound to try and keep alive their individuality and their integrity. Then you have the white population, whose lives and prosperity have to be safeguarded. Along with the powerful minorities of Indians themselves, they must know where they are going to be in the new federated India. Then again, there is the thorny Hindu-Moslem question.

Following the Round Table Conferences there must be evolved a scheme, a Constitution, giving as much liberty as possible to the Indian peoples, further Indianising the services, and introducing such measures of responsible self-government in the provinces and at the centre, which will raise the status of India and Indians in the eyes of the civilised world. The way must be open

towards the ultimate goal of Dominion status or a status in no way inferior to it, consonant with India's own self-respect and her connection with one of the most civilised nations of the world. It cannot be denied that India has a legitimate aspiration, the heritage which she can claim in the British Commonwealth of Nations.

The new Constitution should recognise the fact that the British parliamentary system is not suited in all respects to India. In securing provincial autonomy, each province, according to its geographical, ethnographical and political position, should be allowed to develop its own Constitution and autonomous state. It would be a great mistake to regard provincial autonomy in India as an abstract principle or as a political shibboleth that could be applied uniformly in all the provinces of British India where, apart from minority questions, you have the fundamental differences between the mentality of the Bengali and that of the Pathan, and between that of the Madrasí and that of the Punjabi.

India often strikes me as one of those tragic mothers of the world, one of those Niobes who have to suffer and see dynasty after dynasty disappear and yet she remains where she was. That is why I cannot help wondering whether, in the long run, she achieves Dominion status or not, she would not really be happier, with a member of the British Royal family as Viceroy, with a Constitution largely Indianised and with her citizens enjoying equal rights in every part of the British Empire. This idea of having royalty at the head of affairs in India is not new. The *Indian Diary* of the late Mr. Edwin Montagu shows that it had a charm for him as it has for many others. To me, an Indian whose ancestors have traditionally

believed in and almost worshipped kingship as an emblem of divinity, emblems of royalty mean something deep and real.

I hope that these musings on India and her problems will open up to many readers vistas of that great land and will bring some fresh ideas. Other countries should give to Indians their good-will and to Britain their best wishes in carrying on a task which she is discharging under the great handicap of dealing with an alien race, but with a singleness of purpose which we trust will be crowned with success, to the permanent benefit of Britain and India alike.

